THE VEDANTA KESARI

" Let the lion of Vedanta roar."

" Let me tell you, strength, strength is what we want
And the first step in getting strength is to uphold
The Upanishads and believe that 'I am the Atman.' "

—SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

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PRAYER

स तन्मयोह्यमृत ईशसंस्थो ज्ञः सर्वगो भुवनस्यास्य गोप्ता ।
य ईशेअस्य जगतो नित्यमेव नान्यो हेतुर्विद्यत ईशनाय ॥
यो ब्रह्माणं विदधाति पूर्वं यो वै वेदांश्च प्रहिणोति तस्मै ।
तँ ह देवं आत्मबुद्धिप्रकाशं मुमुक्षुर्वै शरणमहं प्रपद्ये ॥

HE is the Soul of the Universe ; He is immortal ; His is the Rulership ; He is the All-knowing, the All-pervading, the Protector of the Universe, the Eternal Ruler. None else is there efficient to govern the World eternally.

He who at the beginning of creation projected Brahma (*i. e.*, the Universal consciousness), and Who delivered the Vedas unto him—seeking liberation I go for refuge unto that Effulgent One, whose light turns the understanding towards the Atman.

—*Swetaswatara Upanishad, VI.* 17, 18.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA THE GREAT MASTER

(*Continued from Vol. XI, page* 410)

SWAMI SARADANANDA

WHEN Tota Puri left Dakshineswar after his long stay of eleven months, a strong resolve came to the mind of the Master to remain in that *Nirvikalpa* state continuously thereafter. And indeed it is a wonderful story how he could remain in that *nirvikalpa* state where individual consciousness gets fused and lost in the transcendental, the state where all the relative consciousness of 'me' and 'mine' is completely obliterated, and the transcendental existence of the Divinity is experienced within the soul. It is that state of supreme unitary consciousness in which not even great Teachers and Incarnations of yore, not to speak of the ordinary striving souls, could remain long, but the Master remained in it for six long months. During that period he had absolutely no consciousness of the body, nor of its physical needs. So, much less could he have any dealings or conversation with others! In that state there was neither 'me' and 'mine,' nor 'thou' and 'thine'; neither one nor two! For the consciousness of two naturally arises from the consciousness of one. In that state all the activities of mind are completely stilled, and reigns there nothing but a transcendental Peace. In the words of Sankara then—

किमपि सततबोधं केवलानन्दरूपं
निरुपममतिवेलं नित्यमुक्तं निरीहं
निरवधिगगनाभं निष्कलं निर्विकल्पं
हृदि कलयति विद्वान् ब्रह्म पूर्णं समाधौ ॥

"The wise one realises in his heart, through samadhi, the Infinite Brahman which is inexpressible eternal Knowledge and absolute Bliss, which has no exemplar, which transcends all limitations, is ever free and without activity,—which is like the limitless sky, indivisible and absolute."

What is felt there is nothing but one beginningless and endless and causeless unconditioned bliss,—the bliss that is beyond all time and space, all name and form! In that state, the soul, the Atman, freed from the limitations of the body-consciousness, transcending all the ideas and feelings that hover in the mind, soaring above all relativity of life, remains in His own ineffable, singular, blissful state of transcendence! It is the state that is described in our Shastras as "Atman revelling in the bliss of the Atman". The Master was experiencing the state in the aforesaid way.

The Master used to say, referring to this *nirvikalpa* state that he experienced no difficulty whatsoever in attaining to that state because, previous to this, he had dedicated all his desires and attachments for the worldly enjoyments to the hallowed feet of the Divine Mother. Did he not dedicate all, saying, "Mother, take back this knowledge and this ignorance; take back Thy *dharma* (piety) and take back Thy *adharma*; take back Thy good, take back Thy evil; take back Thy sin, take back Thy virtue; take back Thy fame and take back Thy infamy; only give me, Mother, the pure *bhakti* to Thy feet"? And so saying, did he actually shake off from his mind all kinds of desires for these things through the love for the Mother. We, ordinary people, cannot even imagine, much less feel, an infinitesimally small portion of that all-exclusive, all-absorbing ecstatic love of the Master. Even if we say, in so many words of mouth, "Lord, all that are mine I dedicate to Thee," in actual practice we completely remove God from His natural seat of our heart, and instal there our own self and self-interest, and busy ourselves in computing gain and loss! In every action we think, "What others would say?" and try to mould our life in that light. It is not unoften that the thought of the future either oppresses or exalts us, and we have, firmly rooted, the conviction in our mind that if we cannot really break and recreate the universe, we have at least the capacity to change and re-shape it.

But the Master never possessed such a theivish mind as ours. Once he said, " Mother, take back all these things given by Thee ". Even from that very moment not even a flicker of desire would arise again in his mind for those things. Therefore we have noticed in his life that whatever he has once offered to the Divine Mother he could never call them again as his own.

Here we want to tell one more thing to our readers. Though the Master dedicated to the Divine Mother everything like piety and impiety, sin and virtue, good and evil, fame and infamy and other qualities relating to the body and mind, yet he could not say, " Mother, take back Thy truths and Thy untruths ". The Master himself explained the reason of it. He once said, " Had I dedicated truths to Her, then it would not have been possible for me to maintain the truth, viz., that I have dedicated everything to Her." Indeed, even after relinquishing everything to Mother, amazingly rigid had he been in his adherence to truth ! If he had said that he would go to a place on a particular day at a particular hour, he would go there exactly at that time ; if he had said that he would accept a certain thing from a certain person, he accepted it from that person only and could not receive it from any one else ; if he had said that he would not take a certain thing or would not do a certain work, from that time forward he was never able to take it or do it. Sri Ramakrishna used to say, " One who maintains fidelity to truth attains the God of Truth ; one who is established in truthfulness, Mother never allows his words to be falsified." And what innumerable instances of it have we not seen in his life ! Here we like to tell a few of them to our readers.

One day, the famous devotee, " Gopal's Mother,"*

*A Brahmin woman-devotee used to come often to Sri Ramakrishna at Dakshineswar She was widowed in her girlhood, but led an extremely pious and devout life. She used to look upon Krishna as her child and used to see constantly the vision of Boy-Krishna, or Gopala as coming and tasting food from her hand and playing with her as a child would with his mother. Hence she was called Gopalar-Ma, *i. e.*, the mother of Gopal.

arranged to feed the Master, herself cooking the meal at Dakshineswar. When the food was served, and Sri Ramakrishna was about to take it, he found the rice was not well cooked ; and with a little feeling of annoyance he declared, " How can I take such uncooked rice ! No longer shall I take rice from her hand. " When these words were uttered by the Master those who were present there thought that it was a mere expression of annoyance at the carelessness of the lady and that it had no more significance than to put her on guard for the future, for the Master's love and admiration for the lady was unbounded, and he could never have meant to carry out his threat literally into action. Everybody hoped that he would foget all about it very soon and he would take food, including rice, from her hand as usual. But the later happening quite contradicted such hope. The Master soon after developed a deadly cancer in his throat, and could take rice no more. And thus his words to " Gopal's Mother " were literally fulfilled.

One day, at Dakshineswar, the Master said almost in a state of trance, "Hereafter I won't take anything else, only *payasam**, only *payasam.*" The Holy Mother was just then bringing the meal for him. When she heard it, she was very much frightened, as she knew well that seldom his words were falsified. So she exclaimed, 'Why need you take only *payasam ?* I shall cook for you rice and soup, which you can take very well." But the Master declared in the same mood, " No, only *payasam.*" A short time after that, he got that disease of the throat which prevented him from taking any kind of curry or spiced preparation; he had to live upon milk-rice and such other like preparations of milk.

Shambhu Mullick was a famous charitable millionaire of Calcutta. The Master used to count Him as the second of the four principal supporters of his,

†A kind of pudding prepared of milk, sugar and wheat or rice or some other grain.

shown to him by the Divine Mother. He had a nice garden-house close to the Kali Temple in Dakshineswar. There he used to spend much of his time in religious discourses with Sri Ramakrishna. There he had a small charitable dispensary also. At that time Sri Ramakrishna was suffering from chronic diarrhea. One day when the Master went to see Shambhu Mallick, the latter suggested that he should begin to take a small dose of opium every day, and further requested the Master to take it from him when he would be returning to the temple. Sri Ramakrishna agreed to do it. Then subsequently in the course of conversation, both forgot all about it.

When evening approached, the Master got up and proceeded to return to the Kali Temple. On the way he remembered that he agreed to take opium from Shambhu. So he came back again to Shambhu's place but could not find Shambhu there as he had gone into the inner apartments of the house. Then Sri Ramakrishna took a small quantity of the drug from one of the servants of Shambhu Mallick in the dispensary. And when he was returning to the temple-parden, he began to feel a peculiar sensation about him ; he could not see his path any further and he felt as if something was pulling his feet to the ditches by the road-side. He tried to be his own self and found that that was not the right path ; yet he could not make out the path. Then, thinking that he had strayed away, he wanted to come back to Shambhu's garden and, to his surprise, he found that he could perceive his path quite clearly to that direction. He retraced his steps back to the gate of Shambhu's garden and, with much care and scrutiny, determined his right path and proceeded some distance towards the temple. But the same confusion and staggering he experienced again. When such things happened two or three times continually, it occurred to him that Shambhu had asked him to take the opium from him (Shambhu). But instead of taking the drug directly from him the Master took it from the servants, and there-

fore the Mother was not allowing him to go. In the first place, the servant ought not to have given the medicine without Shambhu's permission, and secondly,according to his agreement,the Master too should not have taken it from any person other than Shambhu himself. Therefore in this taking of opium were involved both lying and thieving, and therefore it was that the Mother was preventing his return by confounding his path. Next he came back straight to the dispensary but could not find the servant. He too must have gone elsewhere. So, finding no other alternative, he took the drug, wrapped it up in paper, and threw it inside the dispensary room through the window, crying loudly, " Here I leave behind the opium." After this, when he was returning to the temple-garden, he found his path perfectly clear, and had none of those confusions he was experiencing before.

The Master used to say, " Because I have offered my whole self to Her, therefore She is holding me by the hand. She never allows me to take a single false step." Innumerable instances of this kind we have heard from the Master about his uncommon fidelity to truth. This kind of truthfulness, this type of complete self-resignation, is unimaginable to the ordinary man.

To exemplify such intense resignation, the Master used to give us often a homely illustration. In the village parts where there is no thorough-fare, people go from one part to the other walking over the small dykes raised upon the boundaries of the fields. The dykes are generally high and narrow. And while going over them, a father takes the small child in his lap, lest the child might fall down if he were to walk by himself. But the elder boy being capable enough goes all by himself, although he holds the hand of his father. In the middle of the path, seeing a kite or some other object of interest, both the children clap their hands. The younger one, being held in the lap of the father, is quite

safe. But the elder one, while going to clap, lets go his hold upon his father's hand, tumbles down, and hurts himself. Similarly, absolutely no fear has he whom the Mother is holding by the hand. But one who is holding the Mother's hand has fear enough—he will have a fall the moment he loses his hold upon Her hand.

Owing to such unprecedented devotion to God, the Master had no attachment to, or attraction for, any object or person of this world, and therefore it was that nothing of worldly objects or mundane desires stood in his way to the attainment of *Nirvikalpa Samadhi*. Only one thing stood in his way and it was the very form of the Divine Mother whom he had been worshipping so long, pouring all his heart's adoration and love upon Her feet, and considering Her as the highest of the high, the noblest of the noble—the most beautiful form

"सौम्या सौम्यतराशेष सौम्येभ्यस्त्वतिसुन्दरी:"

(The charmingly handsome, the most charming of all charming objects, the extremely beautiful one !)

The Master used to say, "The moment I concentrated the whole of my mind, and was about to focus it upon Unity, I found the Mother's form stood before me, and, at once, the desire to go beyond it, relinquishing the form, vanished ! The mind would not go beyond it. As many times as I tried to make my mind perfectly contentless by driving away all thought-forms, so many times I experienced the same difficulty. At last, after pondering well, I made my mind strong, and imagined knowledge as a sword, and with it I cut the form of the Divine Mother into twain ! Then there remained nothing in the mind. It quickly soared to the *Nirvikalpa state*." To us these words may appear meaningless, as never have we attempted to make any form of the Divine Mother our own, nor learnt to dedicate so exclusively

all our heart's emotion to Her. In its stead, that kind of all-absorbing love we possess for our body and the little self. And therefore we tremble at the prospect of death, or of any sudden change of our self. But that was not the case with the Master. He, with all his mind and soul held the Mother as the only reality and the only object worth loving, and was spending the whole of his time in the worship of the holy image of the Mother,—Her form naturally occupied the whole of his mind ,and filled the whole of his soul. Therefore, when that form, its only content, was removed from the mind, it became perfectly contentless and devoid of all other mentation ; it attained the highest super-conscious state of *Nirvikalpa Samadhi.* Reader, if you cannot comprehend it fully, at least try to picture to your mind, to some extent, how deeply and fully the Master's soul was imbued with the love of the Divine Mother.

THE PSYCHOLOGICAL VERITIES IN SPIRITUAL LIFE

SWAMI SIDDHESWARANANDA

THE study of mind and the nature of consciousness was carried on in India and satisfactory solutions had been arrived at, when civilisation had not yet dawned on European soil. In the modern age when we find reputed scholars giving out opinions similar to, or approximating, the truths discovered by Patanjali and other psychologists of ancient India, we cannot but admire the scientific precision in which studies in such a subtle subject as psychology, were made by our forefathers. Charles Baudouin in his book "Suggestion and Auto-suggestion" has the following words of admiration: "As one of the curiosities of history and further *as a lesson in humility* (the *italics* are ours) we may point out that the states just described.......are described with considerable psychological acumen, though not of course in modern psychological terminology, in the precepts by which for centuries past the Yogis of Hindustan have been accustomed to attain self-mastery." Again, in his concluding paragraph, he makes another beautiful statement, too well appreciated in India. He says: "The work of modern science is a great achievement, but is incomplete. For its completion a certain change is required both in outlook and method. As the philosopher Spir has well put it, 'We are masters of nature externally alone, inwardly we are nature's slaves!' Studying only too well all that surrounds us, we have forgotten our own personality, and now or never is the moment when we must put into practice the maxim of Thales, 'Know Thyself.' The doctrine of the New Nancy School in conjunction with other doctrines of contemporary psychologists enables us to make a great advance in this knowledge."

To understand the contribution of contemporary psychologists towards the knowledge of our own selves, we have to study the history of the findings made by different scholars in these years. Of these scholars we can mainly speak of three schools of opinion. Their teachings, different though they may be in their pursuits, only supplement one another.

First of all, we have to consider the Freudian school of psychologists. Freud is a doctor by profession who unwittingly

embarked on a new sphere of knowledge in diagnosing his patients. The results of his experiments have made it possible for a genetic theory of mind to be gradually built up. Freud is mainly a clinical psychologist. " In his efforts to ascertain the significance and therefore the genesis of neurotic symptoms, he made the remarkable and quite unexpected discovery that these have a remarkable psychological meaning and purpose, one, however, that is totally unknown to the patient......He found that the patient opposed a dynamic resistance to the revealing of his previously unconscious thought and Freud concluded that the force thus manifesting itself outwardly was the same one that had hitherto prevented the patient from becoming aware of these thoughts. To the force operative in the latter (inward) direction he gives the name of repression. " For tracing the unconscious thought Freud used a technique known as *psycho-analysis*. As a result, he found himself in a region of mind which was quite different in character from the conscious mind. This sphere of mind he calls the "*unconscious*". The nature of this buried stratum of mind next engaged his attention and he was able " to detect the contribution made by the unconscious to various modes of mental activity ".

Mental life is summarised by Freud under two principles: (1) the pleasure principle, and (2) the reality principle. The former represents the primary original form of mental activity and is characteristic of the earliest stages of human development. In its primary attributes we find a tendency to avoid pain and disagreeableness and a never-ceasing demand for immediate gratification of various desires—of a distinctly primitive and lowly order. This principle is essentially antisocial. But in the *reality principle* we find the attempts made by the ego to adapt itself to the exigencies of the real world outside. In other words, the *reality-principle* checks the animal impulse in man by social and ethical considerations. These two principles are always in conflict. Man becomes ethically perfected and advances socially as a civilised being only when he is able to change the under-currents of his animal nature into very healthy humanitarian channels.

Freud asserted that man is merely a sexual being and all his actions can be explained by this nature alone. This created a wave of excitement against the author who wanted to explain the richest and noblest sentiments of man by ' the

reproach of the basest naturalism'. "To present religion, morality, art and the like as sublimated sexuality would be as lacking in taste as to characterise the execution of Beethoven's violin concerto as a refined form of the vibration of catgut."

In this connection we have to remind our readers that Freud used the word "sex" in a sense quite different from what we ordinarily mean by it. A lack of understanding regarding the true implication of the term has caused all this brunt of opposition. In India we need not be astounded at this discovery. In the Vedas it is declared that desire first arose in the mind of the Creator. He proclaimed "*Ekoham, bahusyam,*" "I am one, let Me be many". The whole universe is projected from the mind of the Creator because of this impulse. This process of bifurcation goes on *ad infinitum* and this is called evolution. The unconditioned appears as the conditioned, the path of *Pravritti Marga*. At the same time, this order can be reverted ; if this impulse is checked and transmuted into a higher energy, that will carry us back to the centre. The energy that finds expression in diversity is the same energy that would achieve unity. The former, Freud calls the sex energy. If he had stated that the primitive passions of man would never change their colour, in spite of all adjustments made by the *reality-principle* to accommodate them for social purposes, then there would be some appropriateness in the charges levelled at him. But when he states that man can sublimate elementary emotions, primitive and anti-social in character, to high levels of mental achievements, he unconsciously admits that man is also a spiritual being. Freud being a doctor of medicine, his main concern was his neurotic patients in whom he discovered that emotions undergoing inhibition had found outlets of expression through diseases. By the technique of psycho-analysis, he found a way to open up the buried stratum of the mind in which unrealised emotions had undergone repression. Such a process alleviated the illness.

All the facts of the mental world cannot solely be explained as Freud has done. In the make-up of our minds, we have to consider not only the emotional aspects, but also the cognitive and the volitional.As on the conscious plane, emotion, cognition and volition determine the course of thought and action, so also, in all the subconscious or unconscious workings of the mind, the counterparts of these are equally visible.

The work of intellect is accomplished by instinct and intuition. Instincts can be traced in the primitive tastes of man realised in dreams. Intuition is seen in the revelations that flash on the conscious mind which cannot be explained away by intelligence or instinct. The French philosopher Bergson understood the existence of the intuitional faculty in man. The Vedantic philosophy posits another sphere called the superconscious and Bergson's intuition touches but the fringe of it. Only when all the other different *purdahs* of the mind are removed, can we gain access to this region. The emotions have to be sublimated; the instincts purified. There must be, to use a Sanskrit phrase, *Bhava-suddhi,* to reach this terminus of knowledge.

The work of volition is equally noticeable in the subconscious regions of the mind. But the character of this volition undergoes a change when it functions in the lower strata of the mind. The word ' volition ' in French is called *vouloir*. Though sometimes meaning will, this word often means wish. The process of wish is on the road to volition, but has not reached it. In that transformation from wishing to willing, to volition, the imagination is lighted up and intensified by some disturbing emotion, slips as it were, gets the lead and prevents the wish becoming will. Imagination then wins. So if an idea is planted in the mind which will be worked out by the force of imagination when the wish is strong for the fufilment of that idea, that idea will be realised and the wish fulfilled, provided there is not the counteracting force of any opposite idea. The reality of this theory as a workable hypothesis was experimented upon by M. Coue at Nancy. He has ushered in a new epoch in the wonder-world of psychological realities, by the miraculous cures effected in patients who sought his advice, and who according to him, cured themselves, by practising the theory of auto-suggestion he has propounded. Before his time, Nancy was already the seat of another school of psycho-therapy. From his predecessors, Coue learnt that even in the so-called hypnotic state, the condition was brought about really through the influence of the imagination of the patients upon themselves. Baudouin is the first great theoretical exponent of Coue's teachings. There are three novel features in the teachings of the New Nancy School:—

I. In hypnotic phenomena, it is not the suggestion given out by the operator that is the essential force in working it

out ; but the real cause for success lies in the subject himself. The suggestion thrown out by the operator, has to be accepted by the subject and become a real auto-suggestion. As a corollary, the chief advantages of psycho-therapeutic cure can be got without outside suggestion and without even producing a hypnotic state. Thus for auto-suggestion, the subject can produce a state of passivity by himself, and freed from any state of tension of body or mind, he can present to himself the idea he wants to place before his mind. Thereby the subject can transform his whole outlook on life.

II. Coue lays great stress on his law of the reversed effort. The operation of this law is the cause of the failure of our attempts. " It means that so long as the imagination is adverse, so long as a counter-suggestion is at work, the effort of the conscious will acts by contraries. We must think or imagine rightly before we can will rightly. In a word, our formula must not be ' who wills can, ' but ' who thinks can, ' or ' who imagines can. ' "

III. The most significant phenomena occur in the domain of the sub-conscious. The new powers which auto-suggestion offers to mankind are based upon the acquirement of a reflective control of the operations of the sub-conscious. Therein the teachings of the New Nancy School are at one with the findings of the Freudian school of psychologists.

Coue has shown to the world the practical value of his teachings. The sensation crated by the system of cures he recommended, made the common people look up to him as a worker of miracle, a title which he disclaims totally. He made people turn to themselves for help in all mental and bodily ailments. He has held out the value of faith and shown how in man lies the solution of all the mysteries that confound him. The effects of his experiments have a far-reaching value. It is creating a revolution in the minds of many. The laws of criminology, the principles of education, theories of medicine and cure, and the growth of social institutions, have to be re-interpreted in the light of these new discoveries of the modern schools of psychology. In an understanding of the workings of the sub-conscious and its education we have the key for the moulding of the future. In the subconscious is capitulated the cultural history of mankind. In studying the actions and motives of man we must know that the whole contents of his sub-conscious mind equally contribute in directing their course. As a man is most powerfully in-

fluenced by his external environment, so also his internal world must be strongly reckoned with in estimating the make-up of his character.

Psycho-analysis is the weapon wherewith to dig into the different layers of the mind, and suggestion and auto-suggestion are the seeds to be implanted therein, and by understanding properly the mechanism of character-formation, it is no wonder that we shall be able to convert this human life from a vale of sorrows into an eternal pleasure-garden.

Suggestion may be defined as the acceptance of an idea by the mind, especially by the so-called sub-conscious (unconscious) independently of adequate logical grounds for such acceptance. " It is an instance of ideo-motor action. The idea is placed before the mind, rather aroused vividly in the mind when the mind is in a state where opposing and conflicting ideas have no chance of making themselves felt, whereupon this implanted idea tends to realise itself. " So the things necessary for working out suggestion are a passive state in the subject—muscular as well as sensory—together with concentration upon the idea. One must put oneself into "a state of contention, " a state of concentration without effort. "It is essential" Baudouin says, "that the attention should remain spontaneously immobilised. This is what happens when one tells the beads." The religious aspirant does the same thing. The whole course of his *sadhana* (spiritual practices) is to de-hypnotise himself. All along he has been thinking himself to be finite matter bound by all limitations. He has to awaken permanently the consciousness that he is the Atman, ever free, ever perfect. For that, he has a regulated course of practices laid down in the Ashtanga Yoga. Baudouin is astonished at the teachings of the Hindu Yogis, for he has the following:—"The two states, whose acquirement must be the novice's first aim are known as *Pratyahara* (mental examination) and *Dharana* (concentration of mind upon a thought). " He then quotes from a treatise on Yoga. He says: "As for auto-suggestion we encounter it in Yoga but tinged with mysticism. The sacred word *'Aum'* is repeated a myriad times, the three sounds A-U-M being well separated and uttered in the respective notes do-mi-sol. This, we are told, produces a mental transformation in the subject, which is preparatory to great spiritual progress. "

For suggestion and auto-suggestion to work effectively, genuine faith has to be developed. If the subject can over-

come all obsessive fears and feel that the springs of success in life are in himself, then he becomes a fit candidate to practise the methods which Coue recommends. Or if he believes in God and the ever-merciful nature of a benign Providence, then any stand he may take on the basis of this belief will work miracles. Dr. Pfister, while estimating the value of religion, says: "I confess that the beauty of a healthy, ethically pure piety has only become overwhelmingly clear to me........." At present it is the therapeutic value of the discoveries of the New Nancy School that has attracted the attention of the world. These discoveries have also a far-reaching effect upon the development of spiritual life.

The difficulties of fashioning one's life on a spiritual basis are too numerous to be mentioned. Our scriptures have said that it is as diffcult to attempt this task as to walk on the edge of a sharp razor. Yet the game has not been given up and history is not wanting in examples of men who have truly lived the life of holiness and spirituality. The discoveries of the modern schools of psychology only help us in understanding ourselves more, to steer ourselves clear of the cataracts and currents of life that often wreck our hopes and make us despair of the Truth.

We have noted that the emotional, cognitive and volitional functions of the mind are visible in the workings of the sub-conscious mind. The blessed feeling that we must live the life spiritual often comes to many of us; but we are deterred from our path mainly because our sub-conscious self has not properly responded to the call of the spirit. So the aspirant after spiritual life has to educate and refine his subconscious mind. All the primitive feelings of man have not left off their colour and this can be easily seen from the ideas that crop up when the sub-conscious is tapped. In the phraseology of Freud, the war between the pleasure principle and the reality principle is very intense. As a result, most of our emotions undergo "repression". They lie in wait in some form or other in the ambushes of our minds and take us often unawares. These emotions have to be sublimated. In the degree a man is able to sublimate his baser passions into finer emotions lies his success in the spiritual life. If he is unsuccessful, his life will be a struggle in the darkness. All the repressions have to be cleared up. And the best way for doing it is by active work. There should not be a lop-sided

development in the aspirant. He must try to educate his emotional, cognitive and volitional faculties as best as he can without starving any one of them for want of sufficient exercise. Very often the aspirant, once beaming with hope and strength, turns out into an abject, neuresthenic, crazy, passionate and eccentric person, because he has disregarded some of the psychological verities of spiritual life. The aspirant is unable to meet the oppositions from his lower self. The most powerful demand on him is made by the sex impulse and on the success of the aspirant in transmuting this impulse into a higher energy depends his success in the spiritual life. Extraordinary vigilance and intense activity are demanded from the aspirant, for the enemy comes to him in different forms. He must be able to find out the real feeling behind all the confusing emotions he is at times a prey to. Once a disciple of Sri Ramakrishna went to him and in his youthful enthusiasm to lead the spiritual life, requested the Master to bless him that he may be successful in killing his passions. But Sri Ramakrishna affectionately told him, "My boy, increase them a thousand-fold, but only change their direction Godwards." The same energy that works as the sex impulse is transformed into divine impulse. We have to realise this secret. The demands made on us by the sex impulse are often exacting and the aspirant must be sufficiently fortified not to succumb to them, nor allow them to undergo inhibtiion in the lower layers of the mind. Hence it is that a life of activity is required. A monk's life in the cloister, a life of inaction, before one is fit for it, accounts for the miserable failure of many aspirants. The great Swami Vivekananda has laid out a plan of action for his disciples in which he recommends a harmonius application of all our mental faculties for the development of our spiritual life. So in the beginning, the aspirant must work consciously to find out ways of sublimating his emotions. If one applies oneself to a life of intense work, of service to one's fellowmen, one gets ample opportunities to sublimate one's emotions. These tendencies in one's mind are the seeds of one's Karma. These can well be worked out by service. It is a fact that they must find a way out. In serving our fellowmen and country with the idea that they are but expressions of the Great Virat, we not only find outlets for our emotions, but also raise ourselves in the spiritual plane. But on the other hand, if we do not allow these emotions to be

sublimated, the force of "repression" will so barricade our spiritual life that ere long we shall have to vegetate all our lives with our ideals unrealised. These repressed emotions will give rise to all kinds of mental, moral and physical illness, that will baffle the attempts of all doctors. It will then be our Karma to suffer perpetual illness and disease, the expressions on the physical plane, according to Freud, of these repressed emotions. The Lord we have to serve is a jealous God and if we do not serve Him in His creatures, we shall have to pay the penalty in the form of illness and disease.

One of the primary requisites for the aspirant in spiritual life is to get the blessing of a Teacher, a Guru, one who has realised God. The Guru tests the earnestness of the student by noting the tendencies of his nature. He then prescribes to him a course of action. The student has only to follow this to enable him to achieve the results. By personal service to the master and by constantly living with him a mental '*rapport*' is established between the Guru and his chela. When the mind of the chela is sufficiently fertilised by faith in the Reality, the teacher plants the seed of spirituality in his mind. This instruction is generally done in India in an imposing and sublime manner. With prayers, fasts and vigils the disciple awaits the appointed hour when the man of realisation will impart the highest truth to his disciple. The student was being tested by the master for many days or even months and years, for he must be a proper candidate. His attention must be keenly rivetted *spontaneously* on the Ideal; for, then only will his sub-conscious self accept his choice of the life-ideal. And when the Guru gives the *Upadesh*, they become sacred words to the student, the precious possession of his life. This ceremony ever coveted by all spiritual aspirants is known as the "*Deeksha,*" the imparting of the spiritual power. If the master is a gigantic personality, no word or sign is required for the transmission of this power. He shall be able to do it by a mere wish, a touch.

After this ceremony is over, the student is to meditate on the teachings till he becomes one with them. Some of the difficulties he has to meet with we have mentioned already. If the progress is slow, or if there are periods of darkness, called by mystics "the Dark Night of the soul," the aspirant should subject his mind to severe analysis, *Vichara*. Thereby he shall be able to find out the obstacles, the various 'complexes' of his mind that block his path. Very often the sadhana is

done with the help of the various Bhavas, mainly the five classical ones—Santa, Dasya, Sakhya, Vatsalya and Madhura. These Bhavas help the great ideal to blossom and flower by the force of an '*enveloping emotion*'. The ideal has to be made vivid always before the mind's eye. If the mind thinks more of the obstacles, they become an obsession and by the working of the law of the reversed effort, our attempts will be frustrated. If we march on to the east, the west must fall off naturally from us. The positive ideal should be our beacon light and we have to progress on with that pole star to guide us.

Above all we have to avoid, in the words of Sri Ramakrishna, all thefts in the chamber of our own hearts. Very often we assume we are meditating on the ideal, but in reality we are only being duped by our own day-dreams that have no bearing at all on that ideal. In the sub-conscious mind a regular current of thought, in tune with our ideal, should be established permanently. When this is accomplished, the ideal of our life will come within the range of practical achievement and the very purpose of human existence will be achieved in that true resurrection of the spirit of man from all the tabernacles of thought and form that constitute this material world.

SWAMI SIDDHESWARANANDA

ENERGY IS RELIGION*

YEARS ago Aswini Kumar went to Dakshineswar to visit the Great Sage†. As usual he was kindly received and a lively conversation followed with Sri Ramakrishna in course of which he asked Aswini Kumar " Aswini, are you acquainted with Naren (afterwards Swami Vivekananda) ? Perhaps not—I so much wish you to be. He is a real man. Narayan incarnate, a B. A. too, unmarried." While speaking, Thakur's‡ face brightened up and pointing to his breast he continued, " If I do'nt meet him for two days it writhes. " Suddenly he became uneasy with an anxious look, and throbbing heart, apprehending some unexpected danger. With tears in his eyes he added, " Poor Naren, his father has died, he is in great difficulty with his younger brothers, does not know how to secure food for them. Oh Aswini, just tell me he will not at least starve. " Aswini Kumar, realising that the man was so much loved by Paramahamsa, replied that Naren could not starve. Thakur's fears and anxieties were instantly gone and he said to Aswini Kumar, " When you assured me so certainly, he will not starve. " Aswini Kumar had not yet met Naren, but had only heard of him. He was not there on that day, and so Aswini Kumar could not meet him. Thakur's intense love and high regard for Naren greatly surprised Aswini Kumar who now became very eager to meet such a man.

FIRST MEETING OF ASWINI KUMAR WITH NAREN

On another day, as directed by Thakur, Aswini Kumar went to Ram Dutt's house in Calcutta. A spiritual discourse was going on. Thakur was getting intermittently listless—the signs of a trance—and muttering low " Why is he not come? Can't go every day." Perhaps he was speaking to his Mother. Just at that time, a young man with big sparkling eyes and dishevelled hair, stepped in with the rush of a hurricane and sat very close to Paramahamsa. All conversation stopped, silence followed. Thakur was in a trance. It was off after some time. He was then finding this young man touching his lower lips—an extraordinary sight indeed. Love was pouring out of Thakur's whole heart. He then calmly spoke to the young man, "Why didn't you come so long? Thou

*A translation of an article that appeared in the Aswini Kumar Number of *Barisal*, a Bengali monthly.

†Sri Ramakrishna. ‡Sri Ramakrishna.

art very cruel, I am restless without thee. Thou art my husband;" then pointing to Aswini Kumar, he said, "Narendra, do you know him—Aswini, the son of our 'Sadarwalla' (late Brojo Mohan Dutt, Small Cause Court Judge)? Speak to him." Needless to say, at the first glance, Aswini Kumar took this young man to be no other than Narendra, as if a voice told him so from within. Then both Narendra and Aswini Kumar left the place for speaking to each other, but as Narendra had a bad headache he could not speak much. On Aswini Kumar's return to the room, Thakur asked him, "Well, did you speak to him? Just fancy, in Keshab one sun shines, but eighteen in Narendra....."

MEETS VIVEKANANDA AT ALMORA

For various reasons Aswini Kumar had not the opportunity of meeting Narendra any more, but he met Vivekananda. It was at Almora. Aswini Kumar was told by his local cook of a curious 'jabardast' Bengali 'Sadhu' riding a horse, speaking English. He also learnt from papers that Vivekananda had been staying there after his conquests in the West and awakening the country from one end to the other. Aswini Kumar went out to meet the 'Hindu warrior.' Nobody could give him any direction. He enquired of the Bengali 'Sadhu.' A passer-by surprisingly said, "You mean the rider 'Sadhu?' There he is on horse-back, that's his house, sir........" Aswini Kumar saw from a distance that as soon as the 'Sannyasi,' clad in saffron, reached the bungalow-gate, a European helped him in dismounting, holding the reins of the horse. Aswini Kumar, a minute or two after, enquired at the door "Is Naren Dutt here?" A young Bengali "Sannyasi" answered in disgust, "No, Sir. There is no such Naren Dutt, he is dead long ago but here is Swami Vivekananda." Aswini Kumar again said, "I don't want your Swami Vivekananda. I want Paramahamsa Dev's Naren Dutt, please tell me, if he is here." Kumar of course readily understood that the young man was a new disciple of the Swami. This conversation at the door reached the Swami's ears. He at once sent for his disciple who replying his Guru said, "A gentleman is enquiring of Naren Dutt—Paramahamsa Dev's Naren." I said, "He is dead long ago but you may see Swami Vivekananda." The Swami cried out "Oh what a hell! Shew him in at once." Accordingly Aswini Kumar got in but he was thrilled with joy at what he had seen there. Since one hundred and fifty years the Bengalee has been under the heels

of 'Sahibs'; one of them (as Aswini Kumar found) was now unlacing the boots of a Bengali 'fakir,' another fanning him. Truly Aswini Kumar gloried in it, quite undreamt of ! The Swami was seated in an easy chair. Seeing Aswini Kumar he sprang up and cordially greeted him. Aswin Kumar said " Thakur asked me once to speak to his dear Narendra but not being well he could not speak to me much on that occasion. A decade passed by. I am meeting that Narendra now. Thakur's words cannot turn false." The Swami in reply sincerely apologised for not being able to speak much with Aswini Kumar on that dav. But Aswini Kumar was apprehending that the Swami who had lately received tremendous ovations from all quarters and met him for a few moments at Dakshineswar twelve years ago might not recognise him. Soon his apprehensions proved groundless.

When Aswini Kumar addressed him 'Swami,' the Swami interrupting him replied " What's that ! Am I a Swami to you ? I'm still that Narendra—the name given to me by Thakur. Kindly address me as such. I am a servant of the servants of Thakur's disciples. Thakur is the crown of my head.

Aswini Kumar—" Well, you made a world tour infusing religion into millions of hearts. Tell me now which way India's salvation lies."

The Swami—" I have nothing new to add. What you have heard from Thakur is the same advice—Religion is bread to our bones, all reforms must come through it, else the mass will not accept them. If you want to do otherwise, it will be as trying to turn the tide of the Ganges and let her flow from the Himalayas in a different channel."

A. K.—Haven't you any faith in what the Congress is doing ?"

S.—" No good out of evil, thus far. Let the country be awakened in different directions. Can you tell me what the Congress has been doing for the mass? Do you think mere passing of a few resolutions there will bring freedom for you? I have no faith in that. The mass is to be awakened. Let those people have full stomach and then they will work out their own salvation. If the Congress does anything for them I have sympathy. The virtues of Englishmen must also be acquired."

RELIGION OF SAKTI OR ENERGY

A. K.—"Is it any special kind of religion referred to by you ?"

S.—" Has Thakur referred to any special religion ? The 'Vedanta' includes all. Thakur mentioned it. I also preach it. But the creed of my religion is Energy. The religion that does not infuse energy I do not care for, let it be the Upanishads, Gita or Bhagavat. Energy is Religion. I understand nothing greater than Energy."

A. K.—" Advice me what to do."

S.—" I understand you founded a school and a college. That's rea lwork. A greater virtue is in you, the gift of knowledge is a great gift. But educate the masses from village to village and the next thing is—the foundation of character. Build the character of your students like thunder. India's salvation lies in the strength of character of the Bengali youths. Just give me a few of your students, let me shake the world. Mind, where there will be Radha-Krishna 'kirtans,' whip right and left. The country is gone to rack and ruin. There is not the slightest self-control—our countrymen indulge in such " kirtans." Is it a deception ? Since long we have had *three " kirtans ", stop them now. Let vigour, energy come* into the country. And tell the untouchables, the cobblers, sweepers, ' you are the life of the nation, boundless energy is in you. You can topsy-turvy the world. Be up. Let the world get a shock. You should also found schools for them and let them have sacred threads."

RIGHT TO PREACH THE VEDAS

Breakfast was ready. Aswini Kumar just before leaving asked the Swami, "Is it true that when the Madras Brahmins called you a Sudra with no right to preach the Vedas. you said, 'If I am a Sudra, then, ye, Brahmins of Madras are the Pariahs of the Pariahs?' "

S.—"Yes."

T. K. "Was it becoming you as a religious reformer possessing self-control?"

S.—" Who says so ? I do not say I was right. The impudence of those people upset me and in a fit of temper these words came out of my lips. What could I do? But did I do right ?"

Aswini Kumar then embraced the Swami and said, "To-day you are higher in my estimation. I now realise how you could be a world-conqueror and why Thakur loved you so much."

SRI RAMAKRISHNA AND SWAMI ABHEDANANDA

IT was Friday, 11th September, 1925, and the birthday anniversary of Swami Abhedananda at the Ramakrishna Vedanta Society, 40. Beadon Street, Calcutta. There was a large gathering of devotees in the hall and at about 3 P. M. Mr. M. (the author of the Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna) came and after greetings, he took his seat by the side of the Swami Abhedananda. The Swami enquired about his health and then Mr. Amritalal Bose requested Mr. M. to relate some incidents connected with the life of the Swami. The Swami just then intervened and requested M. to speak something about Sri Ramakrishna and said :—

"When the Swami Vivekananda returned from the West for the first time he was received with great enthusiasm by the people of Calcutta in the Town Hall. I was then in America and perhaps, Master Mahashay (M.), you were present at the meeting. In that meeting Swami Vivekananda said, 'You have received me with great ovation, but you do not know to whom all the credit is due. First of all try to understand what my Guru, Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa was. Taking a handful of dust from the streets of Calcutta and blowing it out, he could produce, if he wished, thousands of Vivekanandas. So great was he." This shows what amount of *bhakti* Swami Vivekananda had for his Guru. There is another instance to show how great a Gurubhakta Swami Vivekananda was. Throughout his stay in the West he never mentioned the name of Sri Ramakrishna in any of his lectures but would only say 'My Master,' because he thought that by doing so he would belittle such a great personality. I too did the same in the beginning ; but afterwards introduced Sri Ramakrishna through the 'Life of a Divine Man.' That lecture has not yet been published. Throughout my stay in the West I used to observe the Birthday Anniversary of Sri Ramakrishna. I would fast the whole day, make special puja in the morning, recite Chandi, and deliver three lectures one in the morning, one in the afternoon and another in the evening and distribute prasad. The prasad consisted of various kinds of fruits, candy, biscuits, etc., which the Westerners generally like. Afterwards the birthday was observed in both the Centres, New York and San Francisco.

The Vedanta Society of New York used to celebrate the Society's anniversary and also Swami Vivekananda's birthday. I amalgamated these two into one.

Master Mahasay :—When did you first meet Thakur (meaning Sri Ramakrishna) ? Before or after passing the Entrance Examination ? "

The Swami : "I saw him before passing the examination. I remember it was in the month of February, 1884. Prior to this time I attended the lectures of Pandit Sasadhar Tarka Chudamani, and the idea of practising Yoga was implanted in me. I then went to him personally to study Patanjala Darsan, but being unable to satisfy me, he sent me to Kalibara Vedanta Bagish with whom I studied Patanjala Darsan and Shiva Samhita. I read the Bhagavad Gita myself as I had the English translation. These books again insisted upon the need of a qualified Guru to practise Yoga. But where am I to find such a Guru ? Except Yagneswara Bhattacharya to whom could I communicate all my feelings ? When I expressed my desire to him, he said: 'There is a *Siddha Yogi* Paramahamsa at the Rani Rasmani's Kali Temple at Dakshineswar, and I think he will be able to fulfil your desire.'

"Then one day taking a morning walk along the Chitpore Road, I found I had reached the Bagbazar bridge. Then a thought came that I might go to Dakshineswar to see that Paramahamsa Dev. Thinking that Dakshineswar was not far off from Bagbazar I proceeded. But I took the wrong road and got lost and at last when I arrived at Dakshineswar I found myself completely exhausted. On enquiring I was informed that Sri Ramakrishna had gone to Calcutta. I was quite disappointed, for I had walked such a long distance for nothing, and I was also too much fatigued. I had no means of returning to Calcutta in the noon, nor had I any money wherewith to appease my hunger. Sitting in a corner of the temple I was brooding over my sad fate.

"Just then, to my good luck, Soshi (Swami Ramakrishnananda) arrived there to see Sri Ramakrishna. Perhaps this was his second or third visit to Sri Ramakrishna. Not finding him, he entered into a conversation with me. I told him about my condition. He consoled me and persuaded me to stay there. Afterwards we bathed in the Ganges and took prasad of Mother Kali.

"Late in the evening, as Sri Ramakrishna had not still returned, I was about to leave Dakshineswar, but Soshi assured me of his coming back in the night, as it was not usual with Sri Ramakrishna to stay away at night. This was the first occasion I got out of house without my parents' knowledge and therefore was all the more anxious to be back home as early as possible. I fell into a reverie. My idea of a Paramahamsa was a person with matted hair, long beard, ash-clad body with a pair of tongs in his hands. I was thinking how I shall salute and open conversation with him. I did not know what the formality was. I was overcome with a feeling of awe.

"At about 10 o'clock in the night Sri Ramakrishna returned and entered his room uttering the name of the Divine Mother three times, Kali Kali Kali. And my name was Kali, and I was thinking what a strange coincidence! He took his seat on the small bedstead. Latu (Swami Adbhutananda) was with him. Soshi went in to salute him and I was standing outside the room near the door.

"Ramlal Dada told Sri Ramakrishna : 'A young boy came to see you in the morning and has been waiting the whole day. Would you like to see him?'

"*Sri Ramakrishna* : 'Yes, call him.'

"At that time my mind became almost blank and I was trembling with that feeling of awe. As I entered the room Paramahamsa Dev asked me to sit down on the mat that was spread on the floor. When I sat down after saluting him, he asked me several questions about who I was, where I lived and so on. After looking at me from head to foot, he said, 'Now it is getting too late in the night, go and retire. I will speak to you to-morrow morning." Then I went out and stayed with Soshi and Ramlal Dada in the verandah where they used to sleep. That was all for that night.

"Early in the morning when he was up, I went to his room and saluted him, and then he was very kind. I asked him, 'Sir, I wish to practise Yoga. Can you teach me?'

"*He said* : 'You were a great Yogi in your previous incarnation. There was a little that was not finished. In this life that will be completed, as this is your last birth.'

"Then he asked me what books I read. I told him that I was reading Gita, Shiva Samhita and Patanjala Darsan. Then he asked me if I could understand Sanskrit. I said, Yes.

Then he asked me whether I wanted to marry. I said, No and he was very pleased and asked me not to marry.

"Then came my initiation. He called me to come to the verandah on the north side of his room. There was a small wooden cot. As I went there he asked me to sit on that cot in Yoga posture. Then he asked me to open my mouth and put out my tongue. And he wrote the Bija Mantram on my tongue with his finger and asked me to meditate. I felt queer as if the whole cosmic existence was melting away. I lost all external consciousness and was deeply absorbed in meditation. I sat motionless like a statue. I did not know what happened afterwards nor how far I remained in that state of superconsciousness. After a long time he put his hand on my chest and awakened me as if from deep sleep. Then he gave me the instructions. I remember a song from Rama Prasad which he sang then :—

Suchi asuchireyloyey divyagharey kobey subi ....

(When you have seen the underlying sameness among all things good and bad, thou shalt have the vision of the Divine Mother.)

"From the very beginning he gave me the instructions of Adwaita. After some more talks he asked me to go to the temple and pray to Mother Kali.

"He told me to relate to him whatever I saw in my meditation. After some time when I used to meditate I saw many things,—all the Devas and Devis. I used to have visions. Once I had the vision of the Omnipresent Eye and many other visions I saw besides.

"About this time somebody came from Calcutta in a hackney carriage and as I was anxious to come home, Sri Ramakrishna put me in that carriage and paid my fare to come back to Calcutta as I had nothing with me. He asked me to go to him as often as possible. I used to repeat my visits to him which afterwards became very frequent. Then I used to stay one or two days with him, and afterwards managed to live with him till his Maha-Samadhi.

"I was the youngest of all his disciples and was about 17 years when I first saw Him."

INITIATION AND ILLUMINATION*

SWAMI RAGHAVANANDA

IN every science or branch of learning we get some help from those who have been before us. We cannot spring without any past straight from the earth like plutonic rocks. We have to take advantage of the accumulated wisdom of those who have struggled with those very problems which face us, and who have found some solution to them.

These problems are not new. They have been faced ever since mankind has been on this earth, and therefore it would be the height of folly for us to disregard such helps, and to say that we shall work from the very beginning, find out the past, and know unaided all that is to be known. It cannot be done ! Because we have to work on the basis of the past. That is what is meant by education. Education means using the accumulated knowledge of mankind.

So, we find a young American boy to-day learning in a few years what took his ancestors centuries to learn. That is because of education and educators. This mass of knowledge is ready for him and he has to assimilate it, and pass through it rapidly, whereas mankind has risen slowly from a lower state to a higher state.

The same is true of religion. There is nothing new in religion. It is the old truths that have to be lived over again, and thought over again, and we have to assimilate the thought, and then we shall come to the goal which the ancients attained. Help from another person is very necessary, because actual living religion is something which affects our lives, it changes our whole nature, and it is not a question of information from study of books, or being able to talk in polished phrases, but it is the moulding of our lives in complete conformity with certain truths, so that our conduct in life and the reactions of life are completely changed. It cannot be achieved by the study of books—that is only secondary, but the real thing is what is transmitted as a seed of spiritual power from one living personality to another. Life only can communicate life. Life only can stimulate life. Books and theories can

*Notes of a class-talk given by the Swami in the Vedanta Society, New York, U. S. A.

never stimulate our religious life, but a person who has realized these truths and has embodied them in his own life, he can do this for us. He makes the scriptures living for us.

So, however modern it may be to say there is no need of a teacher in religion, for our soul to rise in union with God, when we come to practical life, to common sense, we find that just as we get help in intellectual studies and other accomplishments from those who went before us, so also in a hundred degrees more, we are helped in our spiritual life, and therefore there is a need for a teacher; and this relation between teacher and disciple must be an actual give and take. Not in words, but it is something real which the teacher must have the power to communicate to his disciple. The teacher must know that something is going out of him, and the disciple must feel that he is receiving something.

There is the necessity of the teacher. What are the qualifications of this teacher ? Not everybody can be a teacher of religion, because in order to teach, one must have something to give. One must have lived and accumulated something in order to be able to distribute it.

The first part of the life is spent in the accumulation of love, of spirituality, in meditation, and in contemplation upon the spiritual truths; and when after these years of practice and introspection, he has accumulated something, then is he fit to distribute his hard-earned truth of spirituality.

The teacher must have these qualifications, and here we find a mention of them in the Scriptures: "He must be a knower of the Scriptures, and sinless, and unsmitten by desire."

These are the qualifications we have to look for in the teacher of spirituality and if they are present we can expect to learn something from him. If these are absent, not only can he not teach us, but there is a danger of his conveying something undesirable in our lives. We do not have to look for character in the teacher of other subjects, but in the matter of religion, in order to teach anything in religion, the teacher has to communicate something to the disciple, and therefore he must be pure in character.

There can be no vision of God, and the perception of truth, until the soul is pure. We have to see if he is pure, and if he knows the Scriptures. By knowledge of the Scriptures is meant the spirit of the Scripture. The teacher who is taken up with the words of Scripture, and not its spirit, misses

the meaning of the Scripture, and the words of the Scripture are a veritable forest in which the human mind is apt to get lost, unless under the guidance of a teacher. A knowledge of the spirit of the Scripture is therefore necessary. It is not necessary for the teacher to be able to talk in polished terms, etc., but he must know the spiritual experiences himself, and then he is to be estimated as a very valuable teacher, as one who can really give us something.

A man may be highly intellectual and learned in all the philosopies of the world, and yet if he has no perception of the truth, he is of no use to us as a teacher. He must be able to give us an insight into the real things of religion, the deep and mysterious things in spiritual life.

"He must be a knower of the Scriptures, and sinless, and unsmitten by desire." He must teach without any desire for name, or fame, not even with the idea of gratitude from the taught but simply to help, and to guide souls who have lost themselves in the midst of worldly existence, back to the truths ! Unselfish love is the only medium by which spirituality can be transmitted. For no other medium can communicate the truths of spirituality. If there is a desire for material gain, then nothing can be gained! The teacher must therefore teach the truth for truth's sake.

What are the conditions which we must look for in the taught ? They are purity, perseverance and a thirst for knowledge. These three things he must bring with him. He must be thirsty for knowledge. When the mind has become unsatisfied with the things of this life, and has seen through them all, and wants something more, something more permanent, then this awakenment has come. This continued desire of the mind to know something of the mysteries of life, and solve the riddle of life and death, and the continuous grappling with everything that hinders us, that is the sign of awakenment !

This intense longing for liberation is so rare, and comes only, as we say in our Scriptures, as a result of great good fortune : " These are very rare to attain: birth in a human body, the desire for liberation, and the guidance and company of a great soul."

When we have these three conditions, then we shall attain to the goal.

When this awakenment has come, we are ready for initiation, and it remains and works in our deep spiritual life as a seed of spiritual power. In the Hindu fable the pearl oyster remains at the bottom of the ocean, and only comes when drops of rain-water fall, and opens its shell and remains in expectancy, until a drop of rainwater falls into it, and then it dives deep down in the water and remains there until it has succeeded in fashioning a pearl.

In "initiation", the taught comes to his particular line of worship, and with that he goes deep down in the ocean of spiritual practice, and struggles with it and works with it until he succeeds in fashioning a pearl of realisation out of this. Therefore, there is the necessity of this "initiation." Every one of us has a particular line of growth, a particular past which we have been, and one particular type of character which determines our way of approach to God. That is peculiar to us. Every one of us cannot look upon God in one and the same aspect : some like to look at him this way, and others another way ; all persons cannot be herded together in one particular form of worship of God.

Therefore there are so many different ways of approaching God. We cannot prescribe one way for all, because our constitutions are different, and our pasts have been different. One person may look upon God as a Judge, one looks upon him as a brother, another a mother, or a father, or a friend. All these different ways are different approaches to God, and they must be given full development.

Trying to force people by public opinion and the like into one belief of God, which does not suit them all alike, resulted in the fact that so many of us go to hear religion and do not feel satisfied because we do not find something that is suited to us. Each one of us has his own particular worship of God in the way he loves to think of God.

The teacher knows, by his association with the disciple, his particular type of mind, and then the teacher gives him a form of worship best suited to him. And with that the disciple begins to work. This teacher usually gives him a formula —some words of texts which represent some particular aspect of divine thought. The disciple, with the particular formula suitable to him, works at it, and meditates and contemplates until his whole soul becomes full with the idea of God. The idea becomes a reality to him whereas before it was only a

combination of a few words to him, now it means so much more to him. And this brings out all his hidden powers. That is what happens by this "initiation" and this particular form of practice.

All the powers that are latent in us come up to the surface. We say that the person who has become perfect is "awakened," that is, God is not merely a word to him, but He is a tremendous reality. He has brought life where there was only lifelessness. The intelligence that is within him has become awakened. The greatest blessing which the teacher gives to the disciple is "May your intelligence be awakened!"

Then that which appeared to you before as lifeless, has become living, and the whole universe becomes illumined in the light of this enlightenment, and you see deeper meanings in life. You come to look upon the universe in a different way. You do not see trees, and houses, and rivers but you begin to see the spirit everywhere.

Thus "initiation" results in illumination, but in order that it should result in illumination there must be sincere belief in thought. Sometimes it comes quickly, and sometimes the hindrances are tremendous. All sorts of things that we have done previously—not in this life alone, but also those before this—have created a stain in our mind, and until this is wiped off, the enlightenment behind will not become manifest.

We must have faith, and we must be ready to wait for a long time to receive the truth. When the mind becomes awakened, all sorts of psychic manifestations come. All these psychic manifestations appear, and we know that our inner spiritual intelligence is getting awakened. There is a continuous growth of truth going on in the back of our mind, and the river of our life begins to flow into the ocean of the existence of God. The mind being filled with sacred thoughts, forms of truth are visualised by the inner eye, vioces of truth are heard by the inner ear, sometimes words of truth are seen inscribed in brilliance. The mind feels strengthened and assured of our destiny and of the truth that is at the back of our nature.

There is a great intimate relation between the teacher and the person taught. We are born in the line of our teacher's spirituality. Our mother and father gave us this physical body, but our spiritual birth is from our teacher.

It is not that one cannot at all attain knowledge of God without external help but it is foolish to disregard the help

which is ready for us. Those who have been blessed in finding a teacher who has really taught them and opened their eyes, their spiritual eyes, who feel that they are grateful to their teacher, and that they have found something in their life that was not there before—certainly they cannot say the help of this teacher is something slight, and that they can as well do without.

The relation of the taught to the teacher must be one of love, faith, humility, and reverence. You must look upon *the teacher from whose mouth words of truth and God come,* with reverence, because he stands as the representative of these truths.

The real teacher is the Supreme Spirit, the Infinite Existence—Knowledge—Bliss. He is the One Absolute Teacher, all teachers being his embodied manifestations for the seeking devotee, centres where He has cast aside the veil, the media or the openings as it were, through which His divine qualities such as love, mercy, knowledge, power, and freedom flow out into this world of manifestation.

We must therefore approach religion and the teacher of spirituality in a spirit of reverence, and if you bring it down as a matter for social functions, lectures, institutions, etc., it is making light of religion which is *the greatest of blasphemies.* It cannot be had in assemblage. It is my relation with God, it is sacred. It is to be understood and realized within myself. Therefore the inner teachings must remain with myself and my teacher.

All these various formalities of religion have made a mockery of it. To attain to God we have to dive deep within ourselves, we have to remain at the bottom of the occean of our heart in order to fashion the "pearl" of spirituality. Real, genuine religion is always a personal thing and it can never be taught in public.

We must see that our teacher is competent to teach, and then we must open our heart to his influence in faith. We must *have* immense faith in the teacher.

We have to see God everywhere; that is the ultimate goal. Let us therefore begin by seeing Him in one place *where He is manifest.* The mind of the disciple concentrates upon the personality of the teacher, and he no longer looks upon him outwardly as a human being, but feels that his *(the teacher's) heart is a temple of God, and within that*

temple is seated, his particular form of God. His mind concentrates upon the Divine in the teacher and he comes to know the greater truths that the God of Truth reveals to him.

In this way, if we approach the facts of religion, with intense desire to learn, and to approach the truth, with a supreme reverence to the teachers, then the highest form of religion becomes manifest to us, and God opens the door to the greatest truths that have been shown to mankind. Initiation leads to Illumination and with Illumination comes the realization that

My Self is the Self of the Universe,
My God is the God of the Universe,
My Teacher is the Teacher of the Universe.

The illumined one no longer worships any particular form of God, nor does he see his particular teacher nor his particular aspect of the Universe. Then remains only the One without a second, the Deity, the devotee, the Teacher and the universe all merged in that One.

ADWAITA*

K. S. RAMASWAMI SASTRI, B. A., B. L.

ADWAITA means non-duality or Oneness. What a bold affirmation! The manifoldness of things is affirmed by the senses. Yet Adwaita steps in and declares just the contrary. This seems to take our breath away. As Sri Vidyaranya says in his famous *Panchadasi*:

मग्नस्याब्धौ यथाक्षाणि विह्वलानि तथास्यधीः ।
अखंडैकरसं श्रुत्वा निष्प्रचारा बिभेत्यतः ॥

(Just as in the case of a man immersed in the ocean, his senses are in a state of desperate trepidation, even so the mind, learning about the Infinite and Undifferentiated sweetness of That and finding nothing to grasp objectively, is scared by That).

But what on the other hand is the mental relation to the manifoldness of things in the case of the man who has realised the central unity? Let Bhartrihari answer:

मातर्मेदिनि तातमारुत सखेतेजः सुबन्धोजल
भ्रातर्व्योम निबद्धएव भवतामन्त्यः प्रणामांजलिः ।
युष्मत्संग वशोपघात सुकृत स्फारस्फुरन्निर्मल
ज्ञानापास्त समस्त मोहमहिमा लीयेपरब्रह्मणि ॥

"O Mother Earth! O Father Wind! O Friend Fire! O Kindred Water! O Brother Sky! Accept my last salutation. I have overcome and dispelled the power of the entirety of wrong knowledge with the aid of pure knowledge which shines with limitless glory and which is the result of purity and merit caused by my contact with you. I am entering into perfect oneness with the Para Brahman."

Let me show at the very outset that such Adwaitic realisation is not a random shot of the over-speculative Indian mind but is also the acme of the realised and uttered inner spiritual experience of the best minds of the West. Wordsworth says about one of his rich and rare experiences thus: "I was often unable to think of external things as having external existence, and I communed with all that I saw as something not apart

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from, but inherent in, my own immaterial nature. Many times while going to school have I grasped at a wall or tree to recall myself from this abyss of idealism to the reality... ....There was a time in my life when I had to push against something that resisted, to be sure that there was anything outside of me. I was sure of my own mind; *everything else fell away and vanished into thought.*" He speaks of occasions and experiences when

"The gross and visible frame of things
Relinquishes its hold upon the sense,
Yea, almost, on the mind itself and seems
All unsubstantiated."

Shelley sings in his *Adonais*:

"The One remains, the many change and pass,
Heaven's Light for ever shines, Earth's shadows fly;
Life, like a dome of many-coloured glass
Stains the white radiance of Eternity
Until Death tramples it into fragments."

"That Light whose smile kindles the Universe,
That Beauty in which all things work and move,
That Benediction which the eclipsing course
Of birth can quench not, that sustaining Love
Which through the web of being blindly wove
By man and beast and earth and air and sea,
Burns bright or dim, as each are mirrors of
The fire for which all thirst, now beams on me
Consuming the last clouds of cold mortality."

Tennyson says thus in his well-known poem on *The Ancient Sage*:

"For more than once when I
Sat all alone, revolving in myself
The world that is the symbol of myself,
The mortal limit of the Self was loosed,
And past into the Nameless, as a cloud
Melts into Heaven. I touch'd my limbs, the limbs
Were strange not mine—and yet no shade of doubt
But utter clearness, and through loss of self
The gain of such large life as matched with ours
Were Sun to spark—unshadowable in words,
Themselves but shadows of a shadow-world."

If this is not Adwaita, what else is it?

This Adwaita realisation was born in India and was given to the world in India. Why was it so? Says Swami

Vivekananda, "There is another type in Asia. Think of that vast, huge continent, whose mountain-tops go beyond the clouds, almost touching the canopy of heaven's blue; a rolling desert of miles upon miles, where a drop of water cannot be found, neither will a blade of grass grow ; interminable forests and rivers rushing into the sea. In the midst of all these surroundings, the Oriental's love of the beautiful and of the sublime developed itself in another direction. It looked inside and not outside. . . . In Asia even to-day, birth or colour or language never makes a race. That which makes a race is its religion. . . . . And then again, the Oriental, for the same reason,, is a visionary, a born dreamer. The ripples of the waterfalls, the songs of the birds, the beauties of the sun and the moon and the stars and the whole earth, are pleasant enough: but they are not sufficient for the Oriental's mind. He wants to dream a dream beyond. He wants to go beyond the present. The present, as it were, is nothing to him." Coupled with this outward pressure of the environment was the inward and upward surge of the Hindu spirit. The special and peculiar inner gift of the Hindu people is its faculty of insight and intuition. Mr. H. H. Chamberlain says well : "The Indians began to think before the Greeks and their thought was profounder and more consistent, and in their various systems they have exhausted more possibilities." It is this rich and rare combination of inner endowment and outer environment that was the cause of the manifestation in India of the apex of all human thought—the Adwaita system.

Let me now briefly trace the history of the rise and growth of Adwaita in India. He who runs may read its growth during the ages, as the phenomenon is the most noteworthy and persistent of all the intellectual and spiritual phenomena of India. There are none so blind as will not see. We may enroll ourselves as the camp-followers of this or that Acharya or spiritual leader. Each of us may have a special bias for work or meditation or devotion or thought. But if, eliminating all these disturbing factors, we try to trace the development of Indian thought, the one outstanding feature is the persistent surge and forward rush of the Gangetic flood of Adwaita thought through the ages. It came down from the eternal snow-clad heights of the Himalayas of the Mantras and the Upanishads:

एकंसद्विप्रा बहुधावदन्ति ।
एकमेवाद्वितीयम् ।
शान्तं शिवमद्वैतम् ।
स देवसौम्य इदमग्र आसीत् ।
प्रज्ञानं ब्रह्म ।
अहं ब्रह्मास्मि ।
तत्वमसि ।
अयमात्मा ब्रह्म ।

The Gangetic flood of Adwaitic thought then poured down into the plains. It was handed down by Narayana to Brahma and by Brahma to Vasishta. The *Yoga Vasishta* is perhaps the most spacious exposition of the Adwaita doctrine and realisation. The stories in it are among the most valuable and convincing in the world. One of the most beautiful declarations of the Adwaitic realisation is in the well-known verse.

दिक्कालाद्यनवच्छिन्नानन्तचिन्मात्रमूर्तये ।
स्वानुभूत्यैकमानाय नमः शान्ताय तेजसे ॥

Let me quote a few more wonderful verses here:

अज्ञस्य दुःखौघमयं ज्ञस्यानन्दमयं जगत् ।
अन्धं भुवनमन्धस्य प्रकाशंतु सचक्षुषः ॥
अनन्ते चिद्घनानन्दे निर्विकल्पैकस्वरूपिणि ।
स्थितेद्वितीयता भावात् कोबन्धः कश्च मुच्यते ॥
निस्तरंगो निर्गंभीरः सान्द्रानन्द सुधार्णवः ।
माधुर्यैकरसाधार एक एवास्ति सर्वतः ॥
समस्तमेव ब्रह्मेति भावितो ब्रह्मवैपुमान् ।
पीतेऽमृतेऽमृतमयो कोनाम न भवेदिति ॥

The Adwaita Ganga then came down through Sakti and Parasara to Vyasa. It is through Vyasa that it issues into the plains as it issues at Haridwar. Vyasa is the Haridwar of the Adwaita Ganga. I know that Vyasa's Brahma Sutras have been claimed by all the various schools of Indian thought as the source of their systems. But as the author of *Vyasa Tatparya Nirnaya* rightly points out, when other *rishis* attacked Vyasa's doctrine, they criticsed it on the footing of its being Adwaita. Though Vyasa in his Puranas and Bharata laid truly and well the foundations of the Indian faith, the top-

most storey of that palace of Indian thought is certainly the Adwaita. In the words of Suka, Vyasa's great son, the Adwaita rushes in a pure and pellucid stream. He shows that fusion point where in supreme love the distinction of soul and Over-soul vanishes in bliss.

प्रेमातिभरनिर्भिन्न पुलकांगोऽतिनिर्वृतः ।
आनन्दसंप्लवे लीनोनापश्यमुभयं मुने ॥

In the *Sukarahasyopanishad* we learn that Vyasa took Suka to Lord Siva for initiation in spiritual truth. Lord Siva replied :

"मयोपदिष्टे कैवल्ये साक्षाद्ब्रह्मणि शाश्वते ।
विहाय पुत्रो निर्वेदात्प्रकाशे यास्यति स्वयम ॥

(If I teach the innermost and unique realisation of the One and Infinite and eternal Brahma, your son will renounce everything in a mood of dispassion and go all alone into the Infinite and Eternal Light).

But Vyasa pressed Lord Siva to teach Suka. Lord Siva then did so. What happened then ? What a master and what a disciple! The Upanishad says :

नित्यानन्दं परम सुखदं केवलं ज्ञानमूर्तिं
विश्वातीतंगगनसदृशं तत्त्वमस्यादिलक्ष्यं ।
एकं नित्यं विमलमचलं सर्वधी साक्षिभूतं
भावातीतं त्रिगुण रहितं सद्गुरुं त्वां नमामि ॥

What became of the disciple ? The Upanishad says :

उपदिष्टः शिवेनेति जगत्तन्मयतां गतः ।
उत्थाय प्रणिपत्येशं त्यक्ताशेषपरिग्रहः ॥
परब्रह्मपयोराशौ प्लवन्निव ययौ तदा ।
प्रव्रजन्तं तमालोक्य कृष्णद्वैपायनोमुनिः ॥
अनुव्रजन्नाजुहाव पुत्रविश्लेषकातरः ।
प्रतिनेदुस्तदासर्वं जगत्स्थावरजंगमे ॥
तच्छ्रुत्वा सकलाकारं व्यासः सत्यवतीसुतः ।
पुत्रेणसहितः प्रीत्या परानन्दमुपेयिवान् ॥
योरहस्योपनिषदमधीते गुर्वनुग्रहात् ।
सर्वपापविनिर्मुक्तः साक्षात्कैवल्यमश्नुते

साक्षात्कैवल्यमश्नुते इत्युपनिषत् ॥

Thus Sri Suka realised the Universal Soul at once and went filled with the nectar of the supreme realisation. He learnt the truth from Lord Siva and revealed the glories of Lord Vishnu. He learnt Truth as Jnana and uttered it as Bhakthi, just as the water is drawn as vapour and showered forth as rain. He went to King Janaka and learnt Truth from him also. If Suka's life and words do not show the unity of Lord Vishnu and Lord Siva and the unity of the statue of Adwaitic Jnana and its pedestal of Karma and Bhakthi, then we shall never learn such unity from less pure and less inspired lips.

The Adwaita Ganga then came down through Gouda-Pada and Govinda to Sri Sankaracharya. We see in him the Ganga at Kasi. He is the *Kasi* (Benares) of the Adwaita Ganga. For was he not the Lord Visweswara Himself incarnated as a man? His disciples contributed their tributary streams of thought to the Ganga of his doctrine. Sankara's works form the *avimuktakshetra*, the heart-point, of the entire body of Adwaita doctrine. From him the life-stream radiates to the very uttermost extremities and courses back to the centre for new richness and power. Well has Vachaspathi called his *Bhashya* प्रसन्नगंभीर —clear and deep, a term that can be as appositely applied to Sankara's utterances as to Ganga herself.

If we trace the course of the stream of Adwaita beyond Sankara who is the Adwaita Kasi, we find it fertilising spacious forests and plains of thought in Vidyaranya and breaking up finally into many meandering streams till it fulfills itself in Madhusoodana's Adwaita Siddhi and enters the sea of Brahmananda. In later years Appayya Dikshita summed up the entirety of Adwaitism in his luminous and voluminous works. In Tamil we find the Adwaita at its sweetest and highest in Tiruvachakam and Thayumanavar's songs a translation of one of which reads thus:—

"Let us adore that Deity Whom the precious Vedas proclaim as Truth Absolute without a second, Who is self-effulgent and is the Self of all selves, Who is the bliss itself and is the source of everything, Who is oneness itself and has no beginning, Whose nature being beyond the pale of all religions is one of non-dependence, Who is full, beginningless and endless, Who is unique and inheres in all, Who is calmness itself and is eternal and pure, Who is beyond all worldly taints, senses and modifications, Who, being non-attached and unaffected shines as the inrunning thread of all, who though residing in every self as illumination is yet uncognised by the mind and Who exists in everybody's heart as the Supreme God of consciousness."

Such has been the history of the rise and growth of Adwaitism in India. It has permeated the entire culture of India through the Brahma Sutras, through the Gita and through Sankara's works. I did not discuss above the effloresence of the Adwaita in the Gita. I will only briefly indicate it here. We find it especially in Chapters V and XIII of the Gita.

योऽन्तःसुखोऽन्तरारामस्तथान्तर्ज्योतिरेव यः ।
सयोगी ब्रह्मनिर्वाणं ब्रह्मभूतोऽधिगच्छति ॥
लभन्ते ब्रह्मनिर्वाणमृषयः क्षीणकल्मषाः ।
छिन्नद्वैधा यतात्मानः सर्वभूतहितेरताः ॥
कामक्रोध विमुक्तानां यतीनां यतचेतसां ।
अभितो ब्रह्मनिर्वाणं वर्तते विदितात्मनां ॥

(Ch. V)

अविभक्तं च भूतेषु विभक्तमिवचस्थितं ।
भूतभर्तृ च तद्ज्ञेयं ग्रसिष्णु प्रभविष्णु च ॥
ज्योतिषामपि तज्ज्योतिस्तमसः परमुच्यते ।
ज्ञानं ज्ञेयं ज्ञानगम्यं हृदि सर्वस्य विष्ठितम् ॥
यदा भूतपृथग्भावमेकस्थमनुपश्यति ।
तत एव च विस्तारं ब्रह्म सम्पद्यते तदा ॥
अनादित्वान्निर्गुणत्वात्परमात्मायमव्ययः ।
शरीरस्थोऽपि कौन्तेय न करोति न लिप्यते ॥
यथा सर्वगतं सौक्ष्म्यादाकाशंनोपलिप्यते ।
सर्वत्रावस्थितो देहे तथाऽत्मा नोपलिप्यते ॥
यथा प्रकाशयत्येकः कृत्स्नं लोकमिमं रविः ।
क्षेत्रं क्षेत्री तथा कृत्स्नं प्रकाशयति भारत ॥

(Ch. XIII)

In the above verses we find all the essential elements and even the essential examples of Adwaita:—Inner realisation, bliss and glory (*Aantassukha* and *Antarjyotih*), becoming Brahma (*Brahma Bhuta*), the Brahmic moksha (*Brahma Nirvana*), the realisation of non-duality (*chhinna dwaidha*), Jivan mukti and Videhamukti (*Abhitah*), oneness of God and Jnani (*Jnanituatmaiva*), everything being God (*Vasudevah Sarvam*), Para Brahma, Nirguna, the Supreme Light (*Jyotishamapi tajjotih*), oneness (*Ekasttham*), infinite Brahma

(*Vistharam Brahma*), anadi, and Brahman being omnipresent like the ether and all-illumining like the sun.

The Adwaita has not only inter-penetrated the entire cultural life of India but it has entered and vivified universal thought as well. It blossomed in Plato and Plotinus and especially in Neoplatonism. It inspired the mediæval mystics. It thrilled Schopenhauer into exclaiming: "In the whole world there is no study so beneficial and so elevating as that of the Upanishads. It has been the solace of my life; it will be the solace of my death." Schlegel says: "Even the loftiest philosophy of the European—the idealism of reason as it is set forth by the Greek philosophers—appears in comparison with the abundant light and vigour of oriental idealism like a feeble Promethean spark in the full flood of heavenly glory, faltering and feeble and ever ready to be extinguished." We know how the Adwaita appealed strongly to the minds of Max-Muller and Deussen. It permeated and vitalised the genius of Carlyle and Emerson and broke into tuneful utterance on the lips of Wordsworth and Shelley. We know how it was taken by the winged words of Swami Vivekananda and Rabindranath Tagore to the West and how it has been a powerful and formative influence there. In fact it is one of the world's great forces outside India.

If such is its operation and such its destiny abroad, its operation and destiny are bound to be even more wonderful in the land of its birth. India is to-day in the pangs of a new birth. In India we find a blend of many races and many religions, of many creeds and many cultures. India is the great laboratory of the future co-operative civilisation of the world. On the anvil of variety with the hammer of Adwaitic unity we must forge the new co-operative harmonious spiritual civilisation of the future. The Adwaita alone tolerates all levels of attainment and links them all to the vivifying and illumining central unity. All other reconstructions are on the basis of carnivorous or cannibalistic reconstruction—the reconstruction of destruction and assimilation. In the Adwaita alone we find the reconstruction of combination into a higher unity, the reintegration of all the colours of the spectrum into the white light. In and through the Adwaita and the Adwaita alone, India will discover and realise and attain the wider and deeper and higher spiritual unity, from which and from which alone will come the reintegrated and perfect social and

industrial and political unity which will usher the dawn of a new era of peace and plenty and prosperity in India and through India's inspiration all over the world. I conceive such to be the mission of the Adwaita in India and the mission of India in the world.

Is the Adwaita system of thought consonant to human reason? That is the question which the reason-ridden modern mind asks and asks imperiously. What is the answer? The answer is certainly 'yes'. Sri Sankaracharya's works are a veritable mine of reasons and proofs in respect of Adwaita Vada. It will not be possible to go into all of them here but I may just indicate a bare outline of such ratiocination. In Sri Sankara's *Dasa Sloki* we have the argument presented in the clearest and simplest terms. It may be stated thus. Whatever we sense is impermanent. But the Atman which is the witness of all transient and fleeting phenomena is changeless and eternal. In dreamless sleep we reach the Atmic state but without being aware of the fact. The Atma is the witness of all the three states of being and is changeless and self-luminous. To quote from *Panchadasi*:

नोदेति नास्तमेत्येका संविदेकास्वयंप्रभा ।

(The Atman is pure, infinite, all pervasive, formless, self-evident, self-luminous Satchidananda).

But the real proof of the Adwaita is not in logic but in the Sruthi (*Scripture*) culminating in realisation. Sri Sankara is never tired of affirming this truth over and over again. He declares at the same time that *Anukoola Tarka* (reason in harmony with revelation) is an aid to Adwaitic realisation.

वाक्यार्थविचारणाध्यवसाय निर्वृत्ता हि ब्रह्माव-
गतिर्नानुमानादि प्रमाणान्तरनिर्वृत्ता । सत्सु
तु वेदान्तवाक्येषु जगतो जन्मादि कारणवादिषु ।
तद्ग्रहण दार्ढ्य अनुमानामपि
वेदान्त वाक्याविरोधि प्रमाणं भवन्ननिवार्यते ।
श्रुत्येव च सहायत्वेन तर्कस्याभ्युपेतत्वात् ॥ Brahma sutras I. 2,

He says again :—"अवगतिपर्यन्तं ज्ञानं । ब्रह्मावगतिर्हि पुरुषार्थः (Do—I, 1).

There are some widely prevalent misconceptions regarding the Adwaita. One misconception is that it declares the world to be an illusion. Sri Sankara clearly declares the existence of three kinds of realities, viz., (1) *prathibhasika*

(*illusory*), (2) *Vyavaharika* (phenomenal or practical or pragmatic or relative) and (3) *Paramarthika* (noumenal or absolute). The existence of the world is neither an illusory reality nor is it a noumenal reality. It is a phenomenal or relative reality. The world is not an illusion but is a transient and relative and phenomenal fact. Sri Sankara expressly says that *Jnana* is *vasthutantra* and thus affirms the objective element in external perception. The world exists in fact till the noumenal realisation is attained.

दृष्टिं ज्ञानमयीं कृत्वा पश्येद्ब्रह्ममयं जगत् ।

The cause is a higher kind of reality than the effect. Let us take the well-known scriptural declaration:

मृत्तिकेत्येवसत्यं

Just as a clod of clay becomes a pot, a wall, etc., and is all the while only clay despite all changes of name and form (Nama Rupa) and is the same clay after the pot or the wall is pulverized, even so is the world one with Brahman. The Brahman existed even before creation.

सदेव सौम्येदमग्र असीत् ।

It is the *Upadana Karana* (the material cause), and the *Nimitta Karana* (the operative and efficient cause) of the universe. The other familiar Adwaita examples and illustrations such as gold and golden ornaments (*kanaka* and *kataka*), the ether in the sky and the ether in a pot (Akasa and Ghatakasa), the sea and the waves, the rope and the snake, mother o' pearl and silver, (Sukla Rajata), etc., enforce the same conception with wonderful amplitude of affluence of illustration. Sri Sankara's doctrine of *Maya* or *Avidya* or *Adhyasa* is only a compendious way of describing the abovesaid view of the universe. *Maya* is not illusion or non-existence or mirage. The detractors of Sankara misrepresent him and then rise with a sense of achieved victory after disproving what he does not declare. According to him Maya is *Bhava Rupa* (positive in its character) and is not an Abhava or negation. Hence in the famous verse which sums up the Adwaita viz.,

श्लोकार्धेन प्रवक्ष्यामि यदुक्तं ग्रन्थकोटिभिः ।
ब्रह्मसत्यं जगन्मिथ्याजीवो ब्रह्मैव नापरः ॥

This *Maya* doctrine of Sri Sankara is not an invention by him but is as old as Indian thought itself. The Swetaswatara Upanishad says: मायांतु प्रकृतिं विद्यान्मायिनंतुमहेश्वरं ।

Another Sruti declares : अजायमानो बहुधाविजायते

How can the one be the many at the same time? As the *Mayavadadarpana* puts it clearly and forcibly: "एकस्यानेक मूर्तित्वं युगपत्परमात्मनः । सच्चिदानन्दरूपस्य सिध्येन्मायामृते कथं ॥

(How can the One Brahman who is Sachidananda become manifold, unless it be through Maya?) One solution is by saying that it is because of His Infinite Power. The logical fallacies which vitiate the assumption that the one actually becomes the many are exposed by Adwaitic teachers in a variety of ways which cannot be satisfactorily or successfully expounded in a popular address. In the Upanishads the Maya doctrine is expressly laid down in many places. The most explicit statement is in the *Saraswatirahasya Upanishad.* Further, it is a common tenet of all religious systems that *Moksha* (liberation) is due to *Jnana* (Knowledge). From this it follows that *bandha* (bondage) is due to Ajnana or Avidya or Adhyasa or Maya. The author of *Svarajya Siddhi* puts this argument neatly thus:

प्राप्तेः साक्षान्मुक्ति हेतुत्वसिद्धेरध्यासत्वं बन्धनस्यार्थ सिद्धं ॥

In fact the real identity of the soul and the Oversoul cannot be explained on any basis except that of Maya being the cause of our present sense of their non-identity. From the point of view of the cosmos Maya is the cause of the unfoldment of the universe. From the point of view of the individual soul it is the cause of the obscuration of the perfect identity of *Jivatma* and *Paramatma* and is called Avidya. If we understand its *vikshepa sakthi* and its *Avarana sakthi* and overcome it by *Jnana* rising into its sublimated state of *Anubhava* or *Aparoksha Sakshatkara,* then and only then can we rise to the Kailasa of Adwatic realisation. Both aspects of Maya are well declared in the Bhagawad Gita in the following verses:

अजोऽपि सन्नव्ययात्मा भूतानामीश्वरोऽपि सन् ।
प्रकृतिं स्वामवष्टभ्य संभवाम्यात्ममायया ॥
ईश्वरः सर्वभूतानां हृद्देशेऽर्जुन तिष्ठति ।
भ्रामयन्सर्वभूतानि यन्त्रारूढानि मायया ॥

In the *Panchadasi* of Vidyaranya the nature of Maya and Avidya is thus set forth:

चिदानन्दमयब्रह्मप्रतिबिंबसमन्विता ।
तमोरजः सत्त्वगुणा प्रकृतिर्द्विविधा च सा ॥

सत्त्वशुद्धि विशुद्धिभ्यां मायाविद्ये यते मते ।
मायाबिंबो वशीकृत्य तां स्यात्सर्वज्ञ ईश्वरः ॥
अविद्या वशगस्त्वन्यस्तद्वैचित्र्यादनेकधा ।
साकरणशरीरं स्यात्प्रज्ञस्तत्राभिमानवान् ॥
परापरात्मनोरेवं युक्त्या संभावितैकता ।
तत्त्वमस्यादिवाक्यैः सा भागत्यागेन लक्ष्यते ॥
जगतो यदुपादानं मायामादाय तामसीं ।
निमित्तं शुद्धसत्वां तामुच्यते ब्रह्मतादृगिरा ॥
यदामलिन सत्त्वां तां कामकर्मादि दूषितां ।
आदत्त तत्परं ब्रह्मत्वं पदेन तदोच्यते ॥
त्रितयीमपि तां मुक्त्वा परस्परविरोधिनीं ।
अखण्डं सच्चिदानन्दं महावाक्येन लक्ष्यते ॥
सोयमित्यादि वाक्येषु विरोधात्तदिदन्तयोः ।
त्यागेन भागयोरेक आश्रयो लक्ष्यते यथा ॥
मायाविद्ये विहायैवमुपाधीपरजीवयोः ।
अखण्डं सच्चिदानन्दं परं ब्रह्मैव लक्ष्यते ॥

We find in the above passage a wellknown adwaitic word *Upadhi*. We find elsewhere another wellknown word *Sakthi*. The fact is viewed from various angles of vision and called by different names such as

नामरूप, अव्याकृत, अव्यक्त, प्रकृति, शक्ति, उपाधि, अध्यास, अविद्या and माया.

I have been impelled to deal with Sankara's Maya doctrine at some length because we have in regard to it the master illusion which is the parent of many subordinate illusions and misrepresentations regarding the Adwaita. The *Maya* about *Maya* is much more wonderful than *Maya* itself. Another misconception about the Adwaita is that it is indifferent to morality. This is a cruel and false and foolish charge. When it declares that *chitta suddhi* (purity of mind) cannot come without *Karma* and that *Jnana* will not come without *chitta suddhi* and that *Moksha* cannot be attained without *Jnana*, what a cruel and audacious misrepresentation it is to say that Adwaita is indifferent to morality. The Kathopanishad says:

नाविरतो दुश्चरितान्नाशान्तो नासमाहितः ।
नाशान्तमानसो वापि प्रज्ञानेनैनमाप्नुयात् ॥

Who are the real relations of the Yogi or the *Jnani?* Let the *Subhashita* speak:

धैर्यं यस्यपिता क्षमा च जननी शांतिश्चिरं गेहिनी
सत्यं सूनुरयं दयाच भगिनी भ्राता मनःसंयमः ।
शय्याभूमितलं दिशोऽपि वसनं ज्ञानामृतं भोजनं
एते यस्य कुटुंबिनो वद सखे कस्माद्भयं योगिनः ॥

The most perfect moral and ethical attitude is thus summed up in the *Yoga Vasishta.*

आपद्यचलचित्तोऽस्मि जगन्मित्रंचसंपदि ।
भावाभावविहीनोऽस्मि तेन जीवाम्यनामयं ॥

Well has Dr. Deusen said: "The Vedanta in its pure and unfalsified form is the strongest support of pure morality. Indians! keep to it."

Equally unfounded is the charge that Adwaita leads to quietism. Is this quietism the indifferentism of the super-egoist? Not at all. In moments of absorption in Brahma Jnana, the Jnani will be quiet because *ex hypotheso* he is at that time out of relation to the senses and is in a state of perfect spiritual bliss. Is he on that account to be regarded as a piece of stone? Not at all. His very presence is a consecration and will uplift all about him by the magic of his realisation. Sri Sankaracharya says well:

ह्यस्माकं यद्ब्रह्मात्मावगतौ सत्यं ।
सर्वं कर्तव्यता हानिः कृतकृत्यता च ॥

A man who has tasted Brahma Jnana cannot be in the net of illusion as he was before. Sri Sankara says:

तस्मान्नावगतब्रह्मात्मभावस्य यथा पूर्वं संसारित्वं । यस्यतु यथा पूर्वं संसारित्वं नासाववगत ब्रह्मात्मभाव इत्यनवद्यं ।

Whenever he is not in blissful spiritual communion, he will be in relation of love and compassion and service to the world and will do unselfish and godly work for the welfare of all and for the guidance of the world of love and peace and co-operation and dispassion and renunciation. What does the Lord say in the Gita?

सर्वभूतस्थमात्मानं सर्वभूतानि चात्मनि ।
ईक्षते योगयुक्तात्मा सर्वत्रसमदर्शनः ॥
यो मां पश्यति सर्वत्र सर्वं च मयि पश्यति ।

तस्याहं नप्रणश्यामि स च मे न प्रणश्यति ॥
सर्वभूतस्थितं योमां भजत्येकत्वमास्थितः ।
सर्वथा वर्तमानोऽपि स योगी मयि वर्तते ॥
आत्मौपम्येन सर्वत्र समं पश्यति योऽर्जुन ।
सुखं वा यदि वा दुःखं सयोगीपरमो मतः ॥

Equally baseless is the view that the Adwaita either shows Personal God the cold shoulder of neglect or damns Him with faint praise. Sri Sankara says in clear and ringing terms:

द्विरूपे हि ब्रह्मावगम्यते नामरूपविकार भेदोपाधिविशिष्टं तद्विपरीतं सर्वोपाधिविवर्जितं । एवमेकमपि ब्रह्मापेक्षितोपेक्षितोपाधिसंबन्धं निरस्तोपाधिसंबन्धं चोपास्यत्वेन ज्ञेयत्वेन वेदान्तेष्पूपदिश्यते ॥

He says again:

मोक्षसाधन सामग्र्यां भक्तिरेव गरीयसी ।

A well-known Sanskrit stanza says:

ईश्वरानुग्रहादेव पुंसामद्वैतवासना ।

The Absolute in relation to the cosmos is the Personal God. But its relation to the cosmos is not a relation of external compulsion. Nirguna Brahma and Saguna Brahma are but two aspects of the same Eternal Being.

Thus these and other misconceptions about Adwaita, widely prevalent though they be, have not an atom of truth in them. The Adwaita is in right and harmonious relation to the entirety of Indian ethic and metaphysic; and in it we see the highest synthesis of Karma, Yoga, Bhakthi and Jnana. What then are its *differentia,* its special and distinctive and distinguishing features? It unhesitatingly takes its stand on the Veda. It shows the centre to which all radii of doctrines converge. It is as all-inclusive as the sky, and allows all luminaries to shine in its spacious amplitude. It is simple and profound at the same time. Its doctrines of *Maya* or *Avidya* or *Adhyasa,* its *Vivartavada,* its declaration of the identity of *Jivatma* and *Paramatma* and its proclamation of *Mukti* being a state of being and not an acquisition from without are among its greatest distinctions and glories and entitle it to the throne of sovereignty—the *Sarvajna Peeta*—in the Durbar of Universal thought.

I shall conclude this discourse by a brief reference to the Adwaita ideal of Mukthi. The chief glory of each faith is its

conception of beatitude, just as its acid test is its attitude towards ethical and social life. The mind of man cannot conceive of a loftier and purer and holier and more blissful beatitude than the Adwaitic beatitude. The Adwaitic Mukthi is not an acquisition but is a realisation of the true and inalienable nature of the soul. The function of scripture is ज्ञापक and not कारक When *Avidya* is removed, the true nature of the soul as Infinite and Eternal Bliss—*Sachidananda*—is realised. The Brahma Sutra says:

मुक्तः प्रति ज्ञानात्

Sri Sankara says in his *Bhashya* thereon:

स सर्वबन्धनिर्मुक्तः शुद्धेनैवाऽत्मनाऽवतिष्ठते ।

"When a man is freed from disease and attains health, it is wrong to say that health is the effect of the removal of the disease. His health is his natural state which is no longer clouded by disease."

Thus in the Adwaitic ideal of mukthi, we have no conception of any change of place from the earth. There is no element of sensual pleasures or sublimated pleasures or superpeasures. It does not admit of any gradation or any graduated scale of bliss It declares the state of eternal being and bliss as the acme of liberation. A well-known stanza occurring in the Mundaka Upanishad as well as in other Upanishads says well :

भिद्यते हृदयग्रन्थिश्छिद्यन्ते सर्व संशयाः ।
क्षीयन्ते चास्य कर्माणि तस्मिन्दृष्टे परावरे ॥

The Adwaitic Mukthi is not Nirvana or extinction but Brahma Nirvana, or the attainment of *Akhanda Satchidananda.*

Further, the Adwaitic doctrine is that *Videhamukti* (liberation after death) is the attainment of self-realisation (through Jnana) at the time of death and that *Jivanmukti* (immediate liberation) is the attainment of self-realisaton through Jnana even here and in this body. Those who pursue the *Karma Marga* go by the *Dakshina Marga* or *Dhoomadi Marga* to heaven (*Swarga*) and enjoy super-terrestrial joys there and return to the earth after their store of merit is spent. Those who pursue the *Sagunopasana* go through the *Archiradi Marga* and attain *Krama Mukti* in Brahmaloka and reach the supreme liberation along with Brahma.

Let me now cull and gather and make a garland (वेदान्त वाक्य कुसुमग्रथन , to use Sankara's words) of a few great Adwaitic passages in the Upanishads:

अणोरणीयान्महतो महीयानात्मास्य जन्तोर्निहितो गुहायां ।
तमक्रतुः पश्यति वीतशोको धातुः प्रसादान्महिमानमात्मनः ॥
अशरीरं शरीरेष्वनवस्थेष्ववस्थितं ।
महान्तं विभुमात्मानं मत्वा धीरो न शोचति ॥
अग्निर्यथैको भुवनं प्रविष्टो रूप रूप प्रतिरूपो बभुव ।
एकस्तथा सर्वभूतान्तरात्मा रूपं रूपं प्रतिरूपो बहिश्च ॥
आमात्रश्चतुर्थोऽव्यवहार्यः प्रपंचोपशमः शिवोऽद्वैत एवमोंकार
आत्मैव संविशत्यात्मनात्मानं य एवं वेद य एवं वेद ॥
अनेन जीवेनात्मनानुप्रविश्य नामरूपेव्याकरवाणि ।

I shall quote in conclusion only two passages—one from an enthusiastic foreign lover of Sankara's works and the other from the writings of my humble self :

"What shall we say, then, of the Master Sankara ? Is he not the guardian of the sacred waters, who, by his commentaries, has hemmed about against all impurities or Time's jealousy, first the mountain Tarus of the Upanishads, then the serene forest-lake of the Bhagavad Gita, and last the deep reservoir of the Sutras, adding from the generous riches of his wisdom, lovely fountains and lakelets of his own, the crest jewel, the Awakening and Discernment."

"Thou bliss of inner vision incarnate !
When I thy holy Bhashyas read, I seem
To see in Kalati by Alwaye stream
Thy birth as master of the cosmic fate.
With *Vidya* as thy soul's self-chosen mate
You followed Thought's bright super-solar gleam.
In your victorious march, your mind's bright beam
Dispelled *Avidya's* night of ancient date.
I seem to see in Mandana's great house
Thy orange-robed form in glory shine
Before the arbitress Saraswathi.
Thy four Mutts stand like four fulfill'd vows
To build to God thy thoughts' supernal shrine
And lead mankind to wisdom's ecstacy."

HUMANISING INFLUENCE IN A JAIL

RAO SAHIB C. RAMASWAMI AIYANGAR AVL., B. A.

MODERN Psychology tells us that every created being is a manifestation of the Divinity. Even he who appears to be the greatest criminal has in himself the germ of goodness, which has however been unfortunately neglected. Therefore the best way of reforming him is to place him in surroundings where there will be no scope whatever for the development of his evil propensities, every facility being at the same time given him for encouraging the virtuous elements in him. Hence it is that in America, in Germany, in England and other advanced countries, the treatment given to a prisoner in the jail is becoming more and more humane. The greatest philanthropists of the nineteenth century devoted the best part of their time and energy towards the question of 'Prison Reform'; and the result is that the old ideal of punishing criminals and condemning them as being wicked all round has been given up in favour of the modern ideal. For, now-a-days, the prevalent belief is that punishment for the sake of improving his character ought alone to be resorted to. For, the real meaning of the term 'penitentiary' is that it is a place where sinners may sit and do *penance* for their past crimes, and, by thus repenting for their old misdeeds, better their nature. The belief that 'once a criminal, he should always be a criminal' is entirely mistaken. There is redemption for all. No one is to be denied the hope of a better life. As the old adage has it,

"There is much good in the worst of us
And so much bad in the best of us
That it behoves none of us
To criticise the rest of us."

Was not an old and savage hunter turned into the greatest of ancient Indian Rishis, I mean, Valmiki, the poet of the Ramayana? Was not a sensuous reveller transformed into the most pious devotee of the Lord, I mean, Leela Sukar? No one knows on whom the grace of the Almighty will fall and at what time. His actions are so mysterious and so much beyond all our little calculations.

These were the thoughts that came into my mind as I visited the Bangalore Central Jail some two months back. Through the kindness of the Indian Superintendent Mr. Matchaivya, I was shown round the various cells, and had thus a good opportunity of studying conditions as they obtain there at first hand. The most striking feature in the whole institution was the broad sympathy that marked every one of the

transactions there. It was not a rule of thumb, for there prevailed the human touch in the treatment of even the most desperate of criminals. I was very glad indeed to find that the love which every one in the State (of Mysore) bears to the person and the Throne of His Highness The Maharaja was so great and their affection for their beloved Monarch so deep that there was not one prisoner in the whole jail who was imprisoned for the sake of sedition! There were criminals of other types no doubt, but a poltical prisoner was a thing unknown in the State.

Even with reference to the others, the aim of the Superintendent has been to wean the unfortunates away from their old life of sin and crime and turn them into better men and women. Recognising as he does that in ninety per cent. of the cases, poverty and starvation are the reasons for crime, he tries to teach every one of the criminals admitted in the jail some art or craft suited to his intelligence and his ordinary habits, so that when he goes out of its portals he may have some honest way of eking out his livelihood. The results in most cases have been satisfactory. And this is shown by the fact that only a very small fraction of the old criminals come back to the jail. The rest have been improved materially, so that they have turned out as honest, industrious and law-abiding citizens of the land.

This improvement is sought to be effected in various ways. The proverb is always true that Satan finds some mischief still for idle hands to do. The Superintendent therefore sees to it that there is no hand idle within the premises, nay nor a vacant brain nor an idle mind. For the juvenile there is regular drill, thus tending to improve their physique, and there are lay teachers whose business it is to train their intellect. Not this alone; there are lectures on temperance held now and then to show them the evils of drinking. Besides, there are various religious and moral discourses held in Tamil, Kanarese and Urudu or the other vernaculars to bring home to their minds the happiness of a virtuous and good life.

For the grown up, there is always some suitable industry taught. And they have such a variety of courses that there is scope for very free choice from among them all. For example, those who have an inclination for such pursuits are taught cloth-weaving and carpentry. There are sewing machines for tailors, smithy-shops for gold and silver smiths, and those with manual dexterity may work at carpet-making or the manufacture of rattan articles. And in all work strict attention is paid to the facts that no one's caste prejudices are offended in this kind of work offered him.

Sor far for keeping their hands busy. But what is of even more importance is to fill their minds with pure thoughts and noble ideals.

It is with this end that religious preachers of the various denominations are holding classes to impart to them the hope and the consolation of Religion. To us the phrase 'the consolation of Religion' is almost meaningless; but to him who is perhaps to be hanged in the next half hour, the words of wisdom and the hope of a better life after death are full of the deepest significance.

Precisely at the moment when he is hanged, a cocoanut is broken to the Lord and burning camphor waved before His image, and a priest prays for the deliverance of his soul. The effect of this procedure, in practice, has always been to make the criminal less desperate and more calm than he would otherwise be.

As they are strictly respecting religious scruples, there are separate priests for Hindus, Christians, Muhammadans and Jains. His Holiness Swami Nirmalanandaji Maharaj, President of the Ramakrishna Mission centre at Bangalore, has deputed Swami Somananda who is acquainted with Kanarese and Telugu to work in the Bangalore Jail, and he is in charge of the Hindus. He conducts classes on every Sunday morning, and holds Bhajana as well. A separate shrine is set apart and he has devised a form of worship in which the inmates themselves have to do all the work, such as gathering flowers for puja, cleaning the room and decorating it with artistic designs. They chant the appropriate hymns and mantrams, wave the burning camphor before the image of God and prostrate at His feet as supplicants for His Mercy and Blessings. I was surprised to find them doing all this and reciting such soul-elevating slokas as those contained in Dakshinamurthy stotra in Sanskrit. There were 746 prisoners on the day I visited the jail, and I understood that most of them were regular in attending this puja. They have begun to like it, the Superintendent assured me, and to regard it as the best part of their day's work.

The next thing I was impressed with was the system of rewards they have devised for industry and good conduct. If a prisoner is behaving obediently, and is always industrious and attentive to the work allotted to him, he is very often promoted to be a Night Watchman or a Work Overseer or a Warder Guard. The point about it is that such a well-behaved man is given ordinary decent clothing and not the particular dress which marks off the prisoner from the free man. And when he merits it by uniformly good conduct for a long time, a remission is shown to him, and his sentence is reduced accordingly. That such liberated prisoners are aware of these elevating and ennobling influences is shown clearly by their frequent visits to the Swamiji after they have come out of the jail and the spontaneous homage they pay him even when there is no necessity for them to do so.

Another softening influence which I found in the jail was the permission given to the near and dear relatives of a prisoner to visit him now and then. They bring, as it were, a breath of fresh air, an atmosphere of light and freedom of the outside world; and there is absolutely no doubt many a character has been reformed in this way. The thought of the wife or child, the mother or son who is sorry and has to suffer for his misdeed works like magic,and the man is impelled to behave better, if not for himself, at least for the sake of those whose honour and reputation he has brought into jeopardy. When he has been more than usually industrious, he is given some money-payment which he may remit to his relatives as a sign that he is still trying to do his bit for them. Thus, in every way, the rigours of prison life are smoothened, and he is taught the dignity of a human being.

For the more intellectual among them, there is a library, provided by a kind Government, where they may be seen reading books or journals. Besides there is a private library where useful books are kept for their use. And to show to them the value of Education, the more literate prisoners who have also been of good behaviour all through are allowed to teach their neighbours in their leisure hours!

Again, the most patient and sympathetic attention is paid to their grievances and complaints and as far as possible their requests are complied with. They are freely allowed to write appeals in minimising the sentence passed on them or in reducing it to a shorter period or for mercy on the ground of heartfelt and sincere repentance; and in all cases, the reply is communicated to them as soon as it is received.

Last but not least in importance is the arrangement for food in this 'House of Discipline.' Generally the meals served here are not very much different from what they are used to take in ordinary life. It is fair in quality and sufficient in quantity to keep them in normal health. Vegetarians are given rice and curry or ragi as the case may be; and for non-vegetarians meat is given every Saturday. In the morning the meal is given at 7 a. m. and in the evening at 5 p. m and speaking on the whole, the arrangement seems to be quite satisfactory.

I was quite delighted with my visit to the Penitentiary, especially because such excellent conditions were to be found in an Indian State, and that under purely Indian management. In fact the Superintendent is held in such respect and regard by all the prisoners that he moves about freely among them all without any bodyguard or gun or other means of protection for himself. He is not afraid of even the most desperate murderer that has found his way in his prison because he believes in all the conquering force of love and sympathy! It is this love and sympathy that has made him use such humanising and refining influences in the jail.

EDITORIAL NOTES

SRI RAMAKRISHNA THE FULFILMENT OF HINDUISM

THE months of January and February witness, in the round of time every year, the celebrations of the nativity of the two great souls of modern India. And the names of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda, within such a short period of a score and a half years, have become the household word, not only in this ancient land of the Rishis but also outside India, among all true seekers of the Light of Heaven. In fact those who can feel the pulse of time, feel unerringly that these two great souls have started a new epoch not only in this land but also for the whole civilised world the full unfoldment of which may take a thousand years more. Within such a short period since their physical disappearance from this earth, their ideas have already become the veritable leaven of the thought-life of India. Wherever we find great manifestations of creative genius in this land, invariably we notice at the back of it the inspiration that proceeded from these two great souls. And so their popularity is increasing day by day both in its intensity and its extensity. That is a very hopeful sign of the day. The heroes' trumpet-call did not fall absolutely on deaf ears and the leviathan is rising again.

After perusing the marvellous life of the Great Master and having heard all of his inner life from those who had the blessed privilege of knowing him personally, hundreds of this land are coming to the conclusion that Sri Ramakrishna cannot but be an Incarnation of God. Perhaps this assertion may appear as too uncritical and too big a pill to be swallowed for some hyper-critical readers of ours. But Incarnation or no Incarnation, it is but an irrefutable fact that Sri Ramakrishna was the fulfilment of Hinduism in the fullest sense of the term.

In the whole range of the religious history of this land, never has arisen a figure who combined in himself all the different aspects of that body of faith which goes by the name Hinduism. Starting from the dim pre-historic days of the Vedas, and coming down with the current of time to the last century, when we scrutinise and ransack all the great personalities who form the shining galaxy of the spiritual stars

of the land, we fail to find a figure, an individual teacher, who stands out singularly as a summation of the whole. The Vedic Age is watered principally by three main currents of faith, *viz.*, Karma, Jnana, and Upasana. We notice the Vedic sages engaged in the performance of complex sacrifices and offering their oblations in the name of this god or that for the conservation of either *manushavitha* or *daivivitha* (worldly values or heavenly values), or merged in the self-analysis of *neti neti* to determine the transcendent Atman Who is eternally pure, free, ever awake, and infinite, or engaged in the upasana making some of the phenomena of nature or aspects of mind as their *pratika,* the symbol of *Saguna Brahman* for worship and meditation. But there are ample evidences to show that these three streams of Jnana, Karma, and Upasana were always held as juxtaposed and contradictory to each other even in the Vedic Age. Assertions like "Brahma grows by work," "This raft of Yajna is too frail," "The uncreated can never be attained by work," "As a hungry child *supplicates* her mother, so do all creatures worship *agnihotra,"* and so on, are not rare to be met with in the Vedic Scriptures, although there arose from time to time Rishis like Deerghathama and Yagnavalkya who attempted at reconciliations among Jnana, Karma, and Upasana, and brought about a meeting point of the three currents. But their note of reconciliation is often drowned in the din of the conflict that was started by the Vedic Rishis and was perpetuated in the subsequent ages by the followers of Mimamsa and Vedanta schools. Later, in the Puranic Age, quelling all the war-cries of the various sects once arose, no doubt, the thundering voice of synthesis of Bhagavan Sri Krishna. He, both by his life and precepts, showed to the then Hindu world how Jnana, Karma and Upasana including Bhakti stand in perfect harmony in the magnificent religious edifice of the Vedas. He showed for the first time perhaps, that a divine alchemy can be wrought on Karma by making it motiveless and thus transmuting it at once into Upasana and a path of God-realisation. He showed that Bhakti is not essentially different from true Jnana in its final issue, although their starting points may be different. He called to make life a veritable *Yagna,* a sacrifice, be that *Yagna* of one kind or another, as laying stress upon one process of thought or another, or on action, or emotion. Perhaps no one religious teacher of the world contributed so much for the

betterment of humanity as Bhagavan Sri Krishna. His personality was so manifold and genius so versatile that he seems to stand head and shoulder above all the other religious teachers of the world in point of fullness of manhood. And no wonder that the Hindus call him the greatest divine Incarnation and worship his memory as constituting the very soul of Hindu culture. In India to-day, perhaps there is no other book that is more popular and commands greater respect than the Bhagavad Gita, and this shows how the Song Celestial has entered into the very bone and marrow of this ancient nation.

And what constitutes the grandeur of this Celestial Song? An impartial student of the Gita notices first its wonderful harmony between the theory of Karma (obligatory duties) and the theory of Jnana, secondly, the path of Jnana and Bhakti, and thirdly, the reconciliation between Vedanta and Sankhya. Understanding the mind of the people of his time, Sri Krishna harmonised in a wonderful sweep of generalisation that "all paths lead to the same goal"

ये यथा मां प्रपद्यंते तांस्तथैव भजाम्यहम् ।
मम वर्त्मानुवर्तंते मनुष्याः पार्थ सर्वशः ॥

(By whichever path man comes to Me, I reach him by the same. Man follows after all the path that must ultimately lead to Me). And his own life shows what absolute non-attachment and motiveless action is, and also how exuberance of *Prema* and *Bhakti* can well be harmonised with the serene meditation of the Jnanin! The Gita and the Maha-Bharata gives one aspect of the great Teacher, and Bhagavatam and Vishnupuranam supply the other.The Krishna of the Gita without his Vrindavana-leela is no doubt an imperfect synthesis. Similarly the *Gopijanavallabha Sri Krishna* without His *Parthasarathi* aspect is an imperfect manifestation of His divinity. The combination of the two can only justify the assertion of Bhagavata Purana that कृष्णस्तु भगवान् स्वयम् (Krishna was the full manifestation of divinity)

But in the subsequent ages that followed the time of Sri Krishna, His grand voice of synthesis was made more and more obscure by the different commentators who rose from time to time and explained the texts of the Gita to support the views of their respective sects. Moreover with the rise and decline of Buddhism and along with it India's coming into contact with the thought-life of the outside world, there arose innumerable religious sects with their Vedic and semi-Vedic

doctrines and dogmas, which made a synthetic view of the entire Hinduism almost impossible. Moreover, when there arose the three Agamic schools of thought, *viz.*, the Vaishnava Agama or Pancharatra, the Saiva Agama or Saiva Siddhanta, and the Sakta Agama or the Tantras, and monopolised the practical religious life of the Hindus ousting the Vedic sacrifices and *Upasanas* throughout the land, things became hopelessly confused and sectarianism and narrow bigotry usurped the place of divine catholicity of the religion of the Gita. And the most astonishing fact was that it was the very Vaishnavas who worshipped Krishna as the supreme divine Incarnation that were the most exclusive of all.

Since the days of Sri Krishna there appeared hundreds of religious teachers,God-intoxicated souls and *Acharyas* in different parts of this great continent, but the wonder of it is that all of them came as exponents of one or the other aspects of that body of religious thoughts which is rather loosely named to-day as Hinduism. A few most prominent of these may be mentioned here such as Kapila, Buddha, Mahavir, Sankaracharya, Ramanuja, Madhwacharya, Gouranga and Vallabhacharya. And it is needless to point out to the students of the religious history of India that all these great religious teachers were exponents of one sectarian view or other of Hinduism. And none of them ever attempted at anything like synthesis of the different schools of religious thought of the land. Among the mediæval religious thinkers of India who attempted at something like synthesis was Vijnana Bhikshu the author of *Samanwaya Bhashya* of the Vedanta Sutra. But neither was he a religious teacher of the first order, nor was his *Samanwaya* (synthesis or harmony) very cogent. Moreover he attempted to synthetise only the six principal schools of Indian philosophy such as Nyaya, Vaiseshika, Patanjala, Sankhya, Mimamsaka, and Vedanta. It was wholly a speculative performance of an inferior order with rather halting arguments and too sweeping generalisations. Evidently that is why it did not carry much weight with the thinkers of the land, nor impress effectively upon its general thought-life. Further, it had no religious bearing. So Vijnana Bhikshu can by no means be called an apostle of synthetic Hinduism.

But "God fulfils Himself in many ways" and perhaps the time came for His fulfilling Himself by exhibiting a synthesis of religious thoughts grander than was ever shown before. Swami Vivekananda tells us about his Master, while speaking

on Gita: "But even where Krishna failed to show a complete reconciliation (*Samanwaya*) among these warring sects, it was fully accomplished by Ramakrishna Paramahamsa in the nineteenth century." Indeed the life of the Master reveals unmistakably the fact that what Sri Krishna started to achieve but could not complete in his time for some reason or other was fully accomplished by Sri Ramakrishna. He started his religious career from the crude image-worship and ascended the ladder of Upasana step by step by sheer force of his inner devotion and hankering, and passing through all the different phases of religious experiences as depicted in different sectarian Scriptures of Hinduism, reached the highest acme of God-realisation or Nirvikalpa Samadhi which is considered in the Vedic Faith as the last word on religion. Not only did he combine in himself in the fullest harmony Jnana, Karma, Bhakti, and Upasana, but also showed to the world by actual experiences and practices the grand synthesis that exists behind the apparently contradictory views of the numerous sects belonging to the three principal Agamic schools. He showed by his life that it is perfectly possible, nay imperative, for one to become a Sakta of Saktas and go through all the different religious practices pertaining to the three *Acharas, viz., Pasyachara, Virachara* and *Divyachara,* and at the same time to melt his heart with the sweet symphony of the Pancharatra school adopting the well-known five kinds of *bhavas*. He showed by his life that it is possible to put oneself under the rigorous discipline of Raja Yoga, and at the same time become the free lance of a Jnanin. He was the most orthodox of the orthodox observing to the very letter of the law, refusing to eat even the *prasad* of the Kali temple because the temple belonged to a Sudra and thus respected the institution of caste. Yet he had the inner strength and perfect freedom to break all bonds of conventionalities and fetters of slavery to custom, and taste even *Mahamamsam* in a superior consciousness of ecstasy. He showed by his very life how soul is truly sex-less and how a true devotee, buoyed up by his religious sincerity and ardour, can truly un-sex himself for the convenience of his spiritual practices and attainment of certain spiritual experiences. The ideal of a spiritual aspirant is perfect freedom from the bondage of matter, of which this body comes first, and he showed how this body can be wholly and completely transcended in the fostering of a religious *bhava*. The name of Siva, Vishnu, Kali and Rama could produce exactly the same kind of thrill

and rob away his relative consciousness in producing the Beatific Vision of the one *Akhanda Satchidananda*. He himself used to say that his experiences had gone beyond all recorded experiences of the Vedas and the Vedanta. He could lose his mind in the contentless consciousness of the *Nirvikalpa Samadhi*, realising the Absolute face to face, as it were, and at the same time he could come down to the relative plane of consciousness and worship the Personal God, his Divine Mother, with all the adoration and simplicity of a little child. The range of the two poles between which his mind swung was infinite indeed. And the religious history of no other nation can point out any individual whose mind embraced such an infinite space of religious thoughts. His mind was deep like the ocean and expansive like the infinite sky.

This is not all. As if to prognosticate the coming religion of the future generations, he appeared as a harbinger of world-synthesis. His mind was not satisfied with the finding of this haromny of different sectarian views of Hinduism, but aspired to bring about a wider synthesis with other religions as well. And he did find the same harmony existing behind Christianity and Islam. His was not a theoretical synthesis of an arm-chaired philsopher, but was a real experience gathered through the regular orthodox disciplines pertaining to these two religions. So far he has shown to the generations that followed him once for all that the basic principles of all religions are the same, and 'all are but His paths'. The man who fights in the name of his religion really fights for his own doxy and thereby indirectly blasphemes Him. All bigotry, all sectarianism, all churchianity is but a denial of God's religion and a great blasphemy to God. The modern human society is in sore need of this gospel as it has never been before. Then, in the view of the fact that every great World Teacher is a fulfilment, an epitome of His past, and a hope and beacon-light for the future, does it require much stretch of imaginatoin to believe that Sri Ramakrishna is the real fulfilment of Hinduism ?

SWAMI PARAMANANDA BACK IN INDIA

A PUBLIC RECEPTION AND AN INTERVIEW

Swami Paramananda, President, Vedanta Centre, Boston, U. S. A., author of numerous poetical works and works on Indian philosophy, and editor of the Vedanta monthly *The Message of teh East,* arrived at Bombay on Friday the 12th February after an absence from India of nearly 20 years. A public reception under the chairmanship of Mr. K. Natarajan, Editor, *Indian Social Reformer,* was given to the Swami the next day. The Swami, replying, said the message he would give to India as a result of his experience in the West was that the true joy lay not in external possessions, but in the inner vision and self-consecrated service of others. That was also the message of Hinduism. "The message that India had to give to the West was the message of brotherhood, universality and tolerance—the message which Sri Ramakrishna gave them. By the blessings of God and of their Guru he has been enabled to convey that message not only to America but to several parts of Europe as well where His Mission had established centres which were very popular among the people of those places."—

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The Bombay Chronicle has published in its issue of the 18th February the following report of an interesting interview with the Swami :—

The Ramakrishna Ashram which is located in a quiet beautiful nook of Laxminagar in the suburb of Khar has been a regular place of pilgrimage to the lovers of Hindu religion and philosophy for the last few days. The centre of attraction is Swami Paramananda, founder and head of the Boston Branch of the Ramakrishna Mission in America, who returned to India on Friday last after an absence of nearly 20 years. The Swamiji, who is a Bengali by birth and a disciple of the illustrious Swami Vivekananda has been in the United States since 1906, and throughout this long period he has been spreading the teachings and ideals of Hinduism and the Vedanta philosophy by classes, discourses, lectures and writings. In all his teachings, he has been singularly free from any sectarian propaganda, and has mainly dwelt on the larger unities of thought and life by which the diversities of colour, race, speech and religion might be reconciled into harmony and goodwill.

AN INTERNATIONAL FIGURE

The most far-reaching influence exerted by the Swamiji has been through his books which now number more than twenty-five. Many of them have gone through five or six editions and have been translated into French, German and Swedish as well as the Indian vernaculars. His literary style is peculiarly simple, direct and delicate, and his luminous exposition makes the higher life practical to the businessman and the worker, and within easy reach of the humblest soul.

Questioned by our representative as to how his teachings of the Vedanta philosophy had influenced the Americans, the Swamiji replied that his method of approach to their hearts was more through personal contact than through formal lectures on Hindu philosophy and religion. In his talks and discourses, he used to dwell mainly on the practical aspects, and explain to them how it woud help even the men of the world to live better and happier lives. This utility point of view has been the dominant note of all his preachings and writings.

NEED FOR CULTURAL CONTACT

Asked as to the American attitude towards India and her problems, the Swamiji replied that Americans were too busy with their own affairs to go into the details of the Non-Cooperation movement, though they appreciated the spiritual aspect of the struggle. The Swamiji depreciated any tendency to ask for help from the Americans in a beggarly way. He advised that Indians should establish a point of contact with the Americans, and should trust to the latter to respond sympathetically.

Asked to explain how such a point of contact could be developed, the Swamiji said that if Indians who went to America lived with certain ideals, it would have an influence on those with whom they came into contact. India had a spiritual heritage to share with others; but the right way to give it was not through formal lectures, but by living with them as one of them, and at the same time maintaining our own ideals and setting up a higher standard of life to them. If we had any intellectual or spiritual gifts, we must exhibit these to them in their practical aspects, as he had tried to do. "Indians," he said, "can give to the Americans a sense of balance, and can teach them how to combine quiet with energy in their lives. Americans readily appreciate the good things that they see in other peoples. And if we take our place with them as equals, and do our part they will respect us, and give us any help they can, spontaneously and of their own accord."

Questioned regarding the recent manifestations of anti-Asiatic feeling in America, the Swamiji said that the only remedy that India can adopt with advantage is to send her sons to America who would influence the people there with their personal contact as explained above.

RESPECT FOR GANDHI AND TAGORE

Asked regarding American opinion about Mahatma Gandhi, Swamiji said that he was held in very high respect there and his ideals and utterances had greatly impressed them. Some of them even wanted to invite him to America but he (Swamiji) was opposed to the idea, because the Americans were not fully prepared to appreciate his message properly, and Mahatmaji would be more respected by remaining here than going there. In this connection, Swamiji instanced the case of Dr. Rabindranath Tagore, who, when he went to America, was told by one of his admirers, " I would have liked you better if I had not seen you at all."

Concluding, the Swamiji recited, as a parting gift, the following verses from his *Rhythm of Life* :—

" Let him speak whose spirit flows like the river in
flood-time, full and strong ;
Let others keep silent—
The tongue that speaketh soulless words
But scattereth pebbles before hungry mouths."

The Swamiji left for Calcutta on Wednesday.

NEWS AND REPORTS

REPORT OF THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION STUDENTS' HOME, MADRAS, FOR 1925

We have great pleasure in noting that the report shows steady and all--round progress for the year under review. The congestion in the Home was relieved by the opening of the Residential High School in July and the removal of the classes to the new building. The temporary recognition granted to the School was made permanent and recognition was given to the lower forms as well. As in the last year, the results of the examinations are satisfactory. The District Educational Officer records satisfaction at the efficient and vigorous management of the institution.

An Industrial School has been opened in July last by the construction of a new workshop with the necessary equipments and recognised by the Department of Industries. The subjects taught are carpentry, cabinet-making and weaving ; preparations are being made for instruction in other allied subjects, the first step taken being to open the Mechanical Foreman and Fitters Section. The course of study extends over four years. Two subjects are compulsory in the lower grade extending over two years, while in the higher grade of two years' course the pupil specialises in the subject in which he has greater aptitude. The pupils are also coached up in business methods. Eighteen boys are working in this section for a professional career.

The Home is the vital and distinguishing feature of the institution. At present 122 boys are living in the Home. With a view to ensure that the boys remain in the Home for a sufficiently long period and thus derive the full benefit of the Home, admissions are confined to lower forms, few for higher forms, and none for college classes.

Swami Saswatananda assumed charge of the Residential Wardenship of the Home in July and the tutorial system was further developed and laid on a definite and well-defined basis so as to set before students the ideals of a *Gurukula* adapted to modern conditions. Every detail in the life of the boys was thoroughly scrutinised and supervised by the Warden and Ward-masters who each had 20 boys under his direct guidance, the guiding principle in the matter of training being to make the boys feel that it is their own home and its ideals could be realized only through their self-sacrifice and co-operation. Moral and religious instruction and devotional practices form an essential part and special feature of the Home. Stories from the scriptures, devotional literature, the Gita and essentials of Hindu religion and ethics on a rational basis

and a comparative study of other religions with a view to observe the harmony among them are taught according to the age and capacity of the boys to assimilate them. Increased facilities were given for sports and games and every boy had his turn daily in one of these. Greater attention was paid to the health of the boys and the health report is satisfactory. Ample opportunities were given to the boys for the enjoyment of the æsthetic and the humane, and for eclat through *Harikathas*, stories from Epics, musical performances, cinema, lantern lectures, visits to places of interest, and festivals. Through the generous support of the appreciating public the financial side of the institution has also been bettered very much. The Permanent Endowment Fund was raised to Rs. 1,23,901-1-3 during the year. The management thanks all those who have helped in the development of the institution and looks forward with faith for greater support in the years to come.

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We have also received the report of the following institutions some time back all of which have done a great service in removing the sufferings and attending to various other needs of the localities by giving medical aid and nursing the sick, help in money and in kind to the poor and the needy, education to the backward classes through primary institutions and libraries, relief work in times of epidemics, flood and famine and the preaching of the *dharma* through classes and lectures :

1. The Ramakrishna Mission, Sonargaon—*for* 1921-1924.
2. The Ramakrishna Mission Sevashram, Narayanagunj —*for* 1922-1924.
3. The Ramakrishna Sevashram, Aminabad, Lucknow—*for* 1923-,924.
4. The Ramakrishna Mission Sevashrama, Brindaban—*for* 1924.
5. The Ramakrishna Mission Sevashrama, Kankhal, Haridwar—*for* 1924.
6. The Ramakrishna Mission Ashrama, Sarisha, Diamond Harbour—*for* 1923-1924.

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A new Vedanta Centre in America :—On Friday, the 6th of November, 1925, was opened a new Vedanta Centre in Portland, Oregon, under the auspices of Swami Prakashananda, the head of the Hindu Temple, San Francisco, and of Swami Prabhavananda whom our readers may remember as one of the former Editors of this magazine and of whose successful tour in Portland we had given a report in another issue. We wish the new centre God's blessings and all success.

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The Griha-Pravesh ceremony of the Sri Ramakrishna Mission Vidyapith—a residential school for boys—at Deoghar took place on the morning of the 18th January, 1926.

His Holiness Srimath Swami Shivanandaji Maharaj, President, Swami Shankaranandaji, Swami Dhiranandaji and several other Sannyasins and Brahmacharins of the R. K. Mission graced the occasion by their presence. Many guardians of the Vidyapith boys together with a number of other guests and a big representative gathering from the local public made the function a really imposing one.

The sublimity of the occasion was heightened when His Holiness Swami Shivanandaji Maharaj carried with due reverence the portrait of Bhagawan Sri Ramakrishna to the new buildings and performed Puja and Aratrik in the midst of blowing of conches, singing of hymns and religious songs. The guests then attended the worship of Goddess Saraswati which was being performed in the neighbouring room.

At about 2 P. M. all invited monks, guests and also poor labourers of the locality were sumptuously entertained with Prasadam.

The annual prize distribution ceremony of the institution was held the following day at 3 P. M. After some beautiful recitations by the boys, His Holiness distributed the prizes and the meeting was concluded by short addresses to the boys given by His Holiness Srimath Swami Shivanandaji and Swami Nirvedanandaji.

The delight and enthusiasm of all present made the function a complete success.

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The First Convention of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission will be held during the first week of April at their headquarters, the Ramakrishna Math, Belur, Howrah. Representatives from ninety-four centres as well as the monastic members of the Ramakrishna Order have been invited for the Convention. The Convention is meant for devising better means and methods of work and for bringing about greater co-ordination between different centres and for discussing the ideas and ideals and methods preached by Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda. We pray that the Lord may shower His blessings on the Convention and make it a grand success.

* * *

CHRISTMAS AT THE VEDANTA CENTRE, PORTLAND

Mrs. R. C. Saule writes :—

The Christmas Service held by Swami Prabhavananda in the new Vedanta Centre at Portland, Oregon, will remain long in the memory of those present.

The service was opened with a Christmas Medley played on the violin by Miss Betty Soule. We all felt a special blessing and beauty

in the salutation of the Divine Mother when chanted by the Swami. This was followed with a vocal number "Blest Christmas morn," sung by Miss Aletha McKeeny. The decoration of Christmas holly and cedar boughs gave our centre a festive atmosphere and proper setting for the impressive service wihch followed.

The discourse on "The Birth of Christ," given by the Swami, brought to our western minds many new and beautiful ideas from the eastern view-point.

The Swami showed us how the great Fatherhood of God had, all through the ages, provided a Saviour to mankind whenever the need arose. Whenever men's minds become so materialised that they lose sight of the Divine Idea, God embodies Himself in human form to save the world. Not only in the birth of Jesus, the Christ, has this happened, but many times throughout the ages, and many times again will it happen. That ultimately each one of us will be a Christ—all will realise the oneness with the Father—that none will be lost.

The urge was strong that we show the brotherly love and oneness with the Father in our everyday life, which Jesus, Buddha, Krishna and other great prophets lived, in order to teach us by their example.

* * * *

CHRISTMAS SERVICE AT THE HINDU TEMPLE, SAN FRANCISCO

On Christmas morning, services were held at the Hindu Temple, to commemorate the birth of the Lord Jesus. The Temple was lavishly decorated with the evergreens and the red berries usual at this season, and huge vases of bright-hued flowers effectively placed on and about the platform. As one entered the cheerful and inviting auditorium, the spirit of Christmas not only greeted the eye, in its outer manifestation, but it warmed the heart and filled the mind.

The services opened with the organ playing the famous Christmas hymn "Come All Ye Faithful," and after the Sanskrit chant by our Swami, Miss Isabelle Bissett sang a beautiful soprano solo. Then Swami Prakashananda delivered his lecture on "Birth of the Christ Spirit". During the offertory, that fine old Christmas carol "Noel," was charmingly rendered by Miss Bissett. The services concluded with chanting by the Swami.

The Swami's message to us was filled with the love of the dear Christ child whose coming to earth we were celebrating. This Christ spirit is ever with us, filling our hearts, strengthening us in our struggling and striving. It is a never-failing light, ever shining in our hearts and minds; purifying us and illumining all our being, dispelling all darkness and ignorance if we will but let it shine out from our heart of hearts.

The Swami's words were overflowing with tender sympathy and loving understanding and could not fail to give each one of us a deeper understanding of the beauty, simplicity and compassion of the Lord Jesus.

The universal all-including philosophy of Vedanta brings all the the Great Messengers of Divine Mother to us in a very special way. Each has His message for us and it is through the broad and deep and never-ending wisdom of Vedanta that our hearts can learn to know these Messengers and to love each and all of them more truly than before.

A WESTERN DISCIPLE

* * * * *

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

The Sixty Fourth Birthday Anniversary of Swami Vivekananda was celebrated in the Ramakrishna Math, Madras, on the 10th January, 1926, according to the usual programme. A fine large sized photo of the Swamiji, decorated with flowers and greens, was placed on an altar in the front hall and pooja and offerings were performed. By about nine bhajana parties and devotees about 400 assembled and to the accompaniment of musical instruments bhajana and dancing were conducted till about one o'clock. About 1,500 poor Narayanas were sumptuously fed in the Mylapore market and the assembled devotees took prasad in the Math. In the evening lectures on the life and message of the Swamiji were delivered, in Tamil by Mr. P. Manickaswami Mudaliar, B. A., and in English by Dewan Bahadur (now Sir) T. Vijayaraghavachariar. Swami Sharvanandaji, the President of the meeting in his concluding speech drew special attention to the present condition of the Hindu society and how it is to be reformed in the light of Swamiji's teachings and to the excellence of the methods suggested by the great Apostle of Hinduism. Prasad was then distributed to the assembled devotees and at 7 P. M. the function was successfully concluded.

The public celebration of the Ninety First Birthday Anniversary of Bhagwan Sri Ramakrishna was celebrated on Sunday the 21st February on a grand scale. Bhajana parties from various parts of the town came in procession with devotees and followers of Sri Ramakrishna in large numbers and filled up the hall. In front of a life size portrait of the Bhagawan beautifully decorated and seated on an altar the devotees made their offerings of fruits and flowers and deeparadhana. Bhajan songs and prayers and dancing to the accomapniment of various musical instruments was then begun which filled the gathering with fervent and tense devotion till one o'clock.

The assembled devotees were then sumptuously fed with the *prasadam* of Sri Ramakrishna. Meanwhile some 4,000 poor Narayanas were being fed in the Mylapore Market. The staff and pupils of the Ramakrishna Mission Students' Home managed the feeding work on both occasions and made it a grand success. At two o'clock, Sriman Gurumurti Rau gave a beautiful Harikatha performance on the wonderful life of the great South Indian Pariah Saint Nandanar which the audience heartily enjoyed. Mr. Seshadri Acharya, Sanskrit Pandit, The Ramakrishna Mission Residential High School, then delivered an interesting and instructive lecture in Tamil on the life and message of Sri Ramakrishna. This was followed by a learned and scholarly discourse in English on the religious experiences of Sri Ramakrishna by Prof. D. Subrahmanya Sarma of the Presidency College, studying them in the light of the experiences of Rishis and saints of the world. The audience was highly pleased with the clear and instructive exposition of the subject. Swami Sharvanandaji in his concluding speech touched upon and explained some points which were not sufficiently explained in the lecture. After Aratrikam and distribution of prasad the gathering dispersed in great joy.

Since writing the above we have received reports of the birthday celebrations from various parts of India, Burma, Malay States. Ceylon, America and other places. We regret we are not able to publish them all here for want of space. Bhagawan Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda are growingly appreciated in all parts of the world and their influence is working out a silent revolution in the minds of thousands. May their blessed names be ever on our lips and their ideal ever in our hearts!

NOTICES OF BOOKS

KRISHNA: THE SAVIOUR, by Prof. T. L. Vaswani. (Ganesh & Co., Madras. 1925. Price Rs. 1-8-0).

The world is now in a transitional stage and there are evident signs of a great unrest, an unrest inherent to a transitional stage. The Hindu Dharma which has preserved the Indian people so long is now put to a severe test. It looks as if the nation has lost its moorings and wanders blindfold, no one knows whither. Fortunately we have among Indian thinkers and writers, men of the wisdom of Prof. Vaswani, an enlarged edition of whose essays and addresses on the life and teachings of Sri Krishna, the Divine Flute-player, we have much pleasure in welcoming. The world cannot afford to live eternally on war and violence and it stands very much in need of the message of the Divine Flutist, with its beautiful song of love.

* * * * *

WITNESS OF THE ANCIENT, by Prof. T. L. Vaswani. (Ganesh & Co., Madras. Price As. 4,.

This small pamphlet seeks to place before its readers the realization of the Hindu Ideal of oneness of Life as the panacea for all evils. The necessity for such an ideal is being keenly felt more and more in the West and the author of the pamphlet has emphasised the necessity of the Hindus taking it up more earnestly and spreading it in the West. Ideal must express itself in *shakti* and service of humanity. The pamphlet will pay the perusal amply.

* * * * *

THE THIRUVAYMOZHI OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA : PART I. (Published by the Yogananda Ashrama, Alleppy. Price 14 as.).

This is a direct translation into Malayalam of the original *Ramakrishna Kathamrita* in Bengali recorded by the disciple of Sri Ramakrishna now famous as M. The translations are rendered in simple, chaste, and idiomatic *Malayalam*, keeping close to the sense of the original. The book, we need hardly say, is a great boon to the Malayalees.

* * * * *

SRI NARADA BHAKTI SUTRAM. (Published by Yogananda Ashrama, Alleppy. Price 3 as.).

The book contains, besides the Sutras, an amplified paraphrase as well as the commentary of Krishnanda Swami in *Malayalam*. This book is a real and new acquisition in the Shastra of devotion for the religious literature in *Malayalam*. We wish the Sutras had been given in bolder or bigger type. We hope the next edition will remove the defect.

* * * * *

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA ON RELIGION AND PHILOSOPHY. (Compiled by Swami Nirvedananda and published from the Ramakrishna Mission Students' Home, 7, Halder Lane, Calcutta. Price 12 as.).

The book contains a good many brilliant and choice passages from the Swami's writings and speeches classified under topical heads. We are sure the book will be of much usefulness for ready reference to those who want to know Swamiji's ideas on any special topic.

* * * * *

IN QUEST OF GOD, by Ramdas. (Published by P. Ganesh Rau, Gouri Mutt Street. Mangalore. Price 8 as.).

The book chronicles the first struggles of the author to emancipate from the bondages of samsara, his renunciation and wandering life as a Sadhu in various holy places. The book is full of interesting anecdotes, instances of God's grace and surrender to His will and gives an insight into the life of a wandering Indian monk.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Swami Ghanananda started from Madras on the 24th August last year on a tour through Coimbatore, Salem and Malabar Districts, with the main object of popularising the ideas and ideals of the Mission through publications and journals. At the invitation of the public, he also delivered lectures in Udumalpet, Pollachi, Coimbatore, Peelamedu, Salem, Namakkal, Velur, Calicut and other places on topics such as 'Education and Human Personality,' 'An Ideal Educational Training for Indian Students,' 'Objects, Ideals, and Activties of the Ramakrishna Mission,' 'Vedanta in Individual, National and International Life,' and 'The Place of Religion in National Life.' The Swami came back to Madras on the 17th December. The Ramakrishna Math, Mylapore, Madras, thanks one and all those who evinced deep sympathy with and interest in the ideals of the Mission by generously subscribing for the journals, *The Vedanta Kesari* and *The Ramakrishna Vijayam* and also making voluntary donations towards the work of the Math and helping him in other ways. A list of the donations is given below:—

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120.	,, N. P. Krishnaswami Aiyar Avl., Namakkal	2	0	0
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130.	,, Y. V. Sitarama Aiyar Avl., Salem ...	1	0	0
131.	,, A. V. Krishnamoorthi Aiyar Avl., Sooramangalam ...	1	0	0
132.	,, Dr. S. Palaniappa Mudaliar Avl., Velur	1	0	0
133.	Anonymous	1	0	0
134.	M. R. Ry. J. Ramachandra Rao Avl., Velur ...	1	0	0
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139.	,, T. N. Ramadurai Aiyar Avl., Velur ...	1	0	0
140.	,, T. K. Subramania Aiyar ,, ...	1	0	0
141.	,, T. P. Somasundara Kandar Avl., ,, ...	1	0	0
142.	S. Ranganatha Row Avl., Salem ...	0	8	0
143.	Anonymous	0	4	0
	TOTAL ...	1284	15	0

स जातो भूतान्यभिव्यैख्यत्किमिहान्यं वावदिषदिति । स एतमेव पुरुषं ब्रह्म ततममपश्यदिदमदर्शमिति ॥ १३ ॥

स He (God) जात: being born (in the form of Jeeva) भूतानि all beings अभिव्यैख्यत् comprehended, expressed by comprehension, इह here, in this body, किं what अन्यं other वावदिषत् could proclaim (can I proclaim) स: He एतं this पुरुषं the Purusha एव verily ततमं the most pervasive, immanent ब्रह्म Brahman अपश्यत् saw इदं this अदर्शं O, (I) have seen इति thus.

Having been born, He expressed all beings by comprehension, and thought: 'whom else can I proclaim here?' He saw verily this Purusha as the most pervasive Brahman and (said to himself) 'O, I have seen it.'

[NOTE—Grammatically speaking, the first half of the text is very obscure, and so naturally, commentators differ in their interpretations. But as regards the true import of the mantra there need be no doubt. The drift is that Iswara or the Atman when got individualised in Jeeva form expresed or illumined the universe by his comprehension. The object of knowledge (ज्ञेय) wholly depends upon the capacity of knowledge (चित्शक्ति) of the subject for its expression (प्रकाश:), for material objects are not self-expressive (परत: प्रकाश:). Hence the relative world is wholly dependent upon the relative consciousness of the individual soul. But the dual vision of subject and object of the relative consciousness appears to be the only truth in the beginning, i.e., while Avidya still clouds the mind. Next, when the soul begins to scrutinise the nature of this object and understand the true meaning of plurality of his visions, he feels Brahman as the only first Principle in the form of a logical necessity. Subsequently what appeared to him first as a mere logical necessity slowly dawns upon his consciousness as its permanent content. And this transmutation, or better evolution of the individual consciousness into Brahman—consciousness is generally called 'realisation of Brahman' and is indicated here by the utterance, 'I have seen it.'

Having been born—i.e., having become *jeeva* and born with the body.

And thought whom etc:—i.e., the *jeeva* wanted to see what other Principles besides his own intelligent self, could there be behind this scene of plurality of the sense-universe.

He saw this Purusha etc:—i.e., he felt it within his own consciousness, that the intelligent Principle which constitutes his very soul and appeared so long to his mind as an individual entity, is the immanent Principle of all existing objects and is the very *be-ing* of the universe. Thus he realised Brahman as the most all-pervasive Principle.

Purusha—the jeeva is call *Purusha* because he dwells within this city, *Puri*, of a body]

तस्मादिदन्द्रो नमेदन्द्रो ह वै नाम तमिदन्द्रं सन्तमिन्द्र इत्याचक्षते परोक्षेण । परोक्षप्रिया इव हि देवाः । परोक्षप्रिया इव हि देवाः ॥ १४ ॥

इति तृतीयः खण्डः ॥ ३ ॥

तस्मात् therefore इदन्द्रः seen as this इदन्द्रः Idandra ह वै verily नाम (His) name. इदन्द्रं सन्तं being Idandra तं Him परोक्षेण indirectly इन्द्र Indra इति thus आचक्षते They call. हि because देवाः gods or respectable persons परोक्षप्रियाः love to be callen by indirect names. इव as if. [The repetition of the last line is to indicate the end of the chapter.]

Therefore He is seen as this (Idandram). Idandram is verily His name. Though He is Indra, He is indirectly called Indra. It appears all respectable persons love to be called indirectly.

Seen as this —i,e., realised as *this* universe.

All respectable persons etc.—such as father, mother, teacher and other such persons worthy of reverence, are never called by their own name, but as pappa, mamma, sir, professor etc., and they all like to be called thus, and not by their own names, by their inferiors.

END OF THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Aitareya-Upanishad

PART SECOND.

CHAPTER I.

अपक्रामन्तु गर्भिण्यः ।

पुरुषे ह वा अयमादितो गर्भो भवति । यदेतद्रेतस्तदेतत्सर्वेभ्योऽङ्गेभ्यस्तेजः संभूतमात्मन्येवाऽऽत्मानं बिभर्ति तद्यदा स्त्रियां सिञ्चत्यथैनज्जनयति तदस्य प्रथमं जन्म ॥ १ ॥

गर्भिण्यः pregnant women अपक्रामन्तु move away. अयं This jeeva ह वा verily आदितः first पुरुषे in man गर्भः germ यत् which एतत् this रेतः seed. तत् that एतत् this सर्वेभ्यः all अंगेभ्यः from limbs सम्भूतं produced तेजः essence of strength, (तत् that) आत्मानं the self, the essence of his self आत्मनि in the self, in the body बिभर्ति (he) holds. यदा when स्त्रियां to women (तत् that) सिञ्चति is deposited अथ then एतत् this जनयति produces अस्य its तत् that प्रथमं first जन्म birth.

Let the pregnant women move away. It first becomes as a germ in man which is called seed. That is the essence of strength produced from all the limbs (of the body). (Man) holds it in his body (the essence of his) self. When he deposits it in the woman, he causes it to be born. That is its first birth.

[NOTE:—The belief is that the *jeeva* comes down from the *chandra Loka* with the light and rain and enters into food-grain, aud when the latter is eaten by man, it enters into his body and is converted into his seed.

That is the essence etc.—semen is considered as the essence of man, drawn from all his limbs as it were, in as much as on it depends the very virility of man.]

तत्स्त्रिया आत्मभूयं गच्छति यथा स्वमंगं तथा । तस्मादेनां न हिनस्ति साऽस्यैतमात्मानमत्र गतं भावयति ॥ २ ॥

स्वं of one's own अंगं limbs यथा as तथा so तत् that स्त्रियाः of that woman आत्मभूयं incorporated with the self (body). तस्मात् there-

fore एनां her न हिनस्ति does not cause suffering. सा she अत्र here (in her womb) गतं entered अस्य his एतं this आत्मानं self भावयति nourishes.

That (seed) gets incorporated with the body of the woman (just) as her own parts of the body, and therefore it does not cause any suffering to her. She fosters his self thus within her.

सा भावयित्री भावयितव्या भवति तं स्त्री गर्भं बिभर्ति सोऽग्र एव कुमारं जन्मनोऽग्रेऽधिभावयति । स यत्कुमारं जन्मनोऽग्रेऽधिभावयत्यात्मानमेव तद्भावयत्येषां लोकानां संतत्या एवं संतता हीमे लोकास्तदस्य द्वितीयं जन्म ॥ ३ ॥

(यस्मात् because) सा she (the wife) भावयित्री the nourisher, (तस्मात् therefore) (सा अपि she also) भावयितव्या should be nourished (protected) स्त्री the woman (wife) तं that गर्भं womb बिभर्ति bears, सः he अग्रे before (the birth) एव verily कुमारं the child जन्मनः of birth अधि after भावयति exalts (by purifiication), सः he जन्मनः अग्रे before the birth यत् what अधिभावयति exalts, तत् that आत्मानं his self एव verily भावयति exalts. एषां these लोकानां worlds सन्तत्यै progeny. हि because इमे these लोकाः worlds एवं thus सन्तताः continuous तत् that अस्य its (jeeva's) द्वितीयं second जन्म birth.

(Because) she becomes the maintainer (of his self within her, so she also) should be maintained. The wife bears that womb. He (the father) exalts the child even before and after the birth. He exalts the son before and after the birth, by that be exalts his own self in order to perpetuate this world of progeny. Thus are these worlds of progeny perpetuated. That is its second birth.

He exalts etc:—i.e., he purifies the soul of the child by the religious ceremony known as *Jata-karma-Samskaras*, which are performed both during the time of pregnancy as well as after the birth. And in as much as his son is only a re-production of his own self biologically, he exalts himself by exalting his son and grandson.

Thus are the worlds etc:—i.e., the line of progeny is perpetuated by these Samskaras, because they make them fit to follow the Path of Dharma and thus gain strength. To live through sons and grandsons and so on, is the immortality of a householder.]